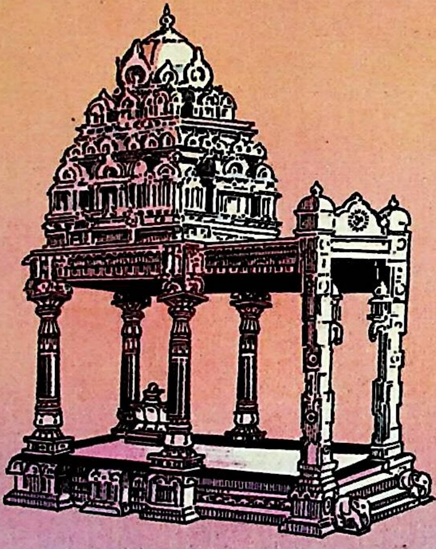
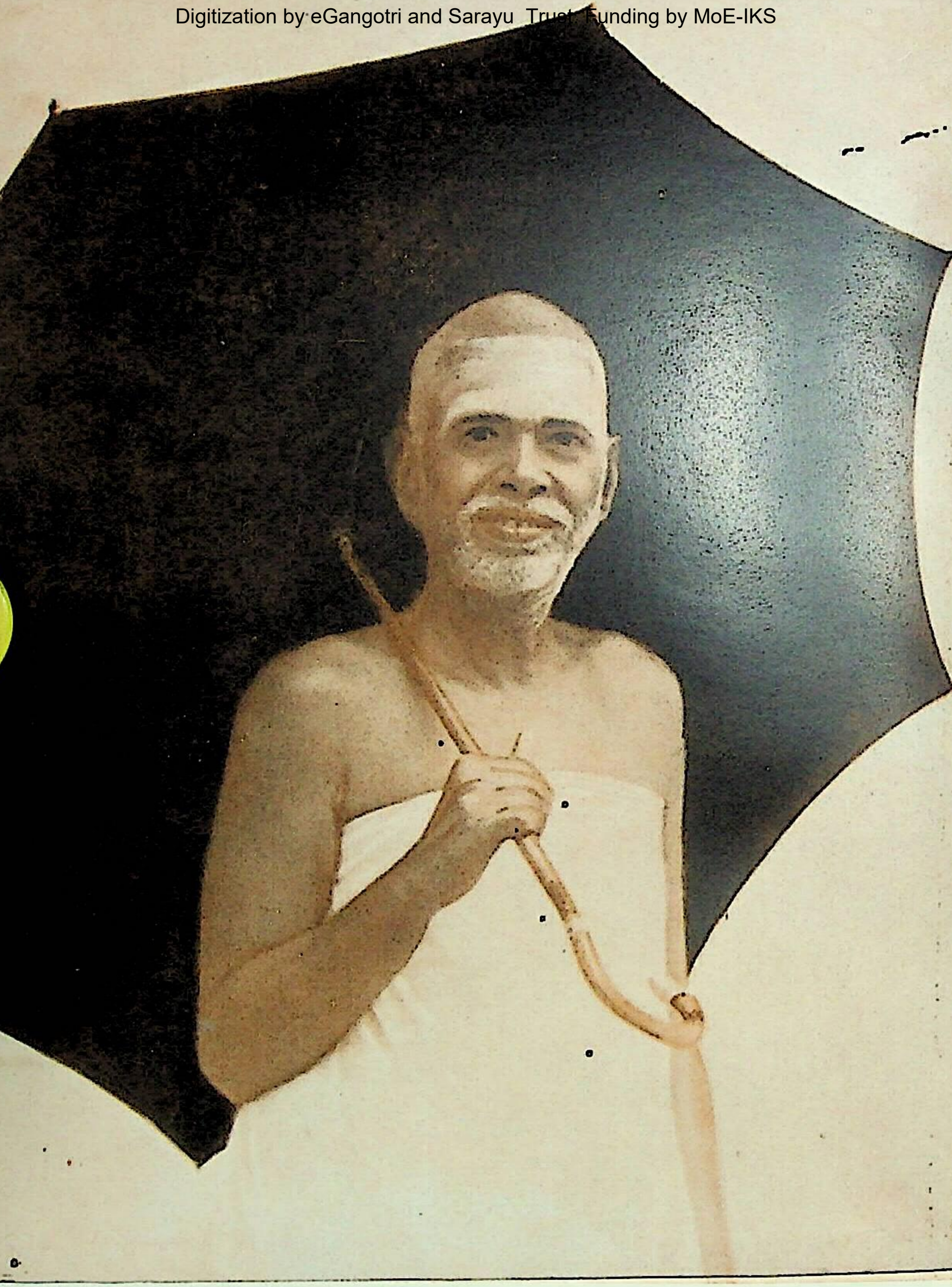
RAMANA



Pictorial Souvenir

Commemorating the Kumbhabhishekam

on **18-6-1967**



May Sri Ramana shower His grace on agriculturists and industrialists and make our Mother India surplus in production by giving bountiful, perennial springs of water in the wells and bore-wells sunk by them.

from N. ṢAMBASIVAN, B.S.D., Water Diviner,
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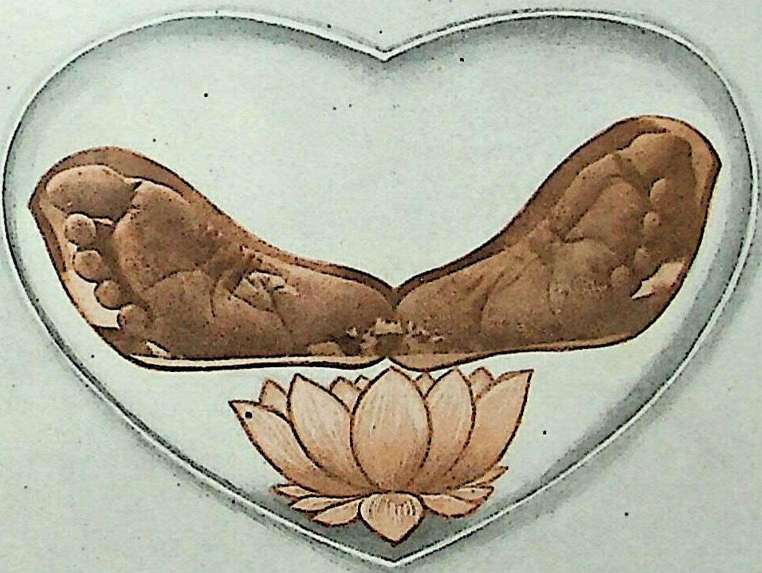
We humbly lay the

RAMANA PICTORIAL SOUVENIR

at the



LOTUS FEET

OF

OUR MASTER

BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

MEDITATION AT THE FEET OF THE GURU

MURUGANAR

GLANCE OF GRACE

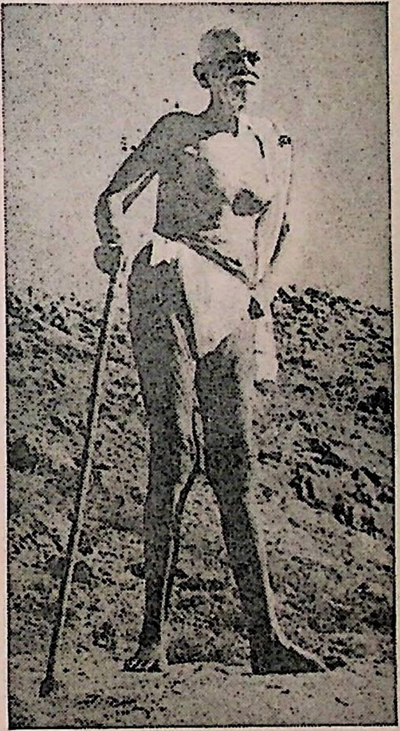
Let us meditate on Ramana,
The Teacher of Reality
Who dwells within my inmost self
As I, as I,
Bringing in full measure
The joy of silence
Ending the delusive pride
Of a divided self's self-love.

In one unbroken silence let us dwell
On the twin feet of the Guru
Glorified above all kings
Because His glance of grace revealed
The Hill of bright Awareness
Shining in a world
Troubled by darkness of desire.

Dear devotees, avid for grace,
Our Master is an ocean,
Take and hold your fill.
Approach him freely,
Minds and hands wide open.
Drink to your heart's content.

Defeated and frustrated, do not reel
Beneath Fate's blows.
Turn your eyes, your thoughts
Towards those sovereign Feet
Which can transmute a devotee
Into Siva radiant.

Like a tree which on a scorching day
Offers cool shade to every comer
By nature, not by choice,
Even so He stands
Calm, immutable, impartial,
Liking or disliking none,
But saving all who reach His Feet.



THE SUSTAINER

Whatever quality marks you and me
He seems to share alike with you and me.
But He in truth is neither this nor that.
He simply IS without a particle
Of any quality.

Be sure He will not let
Those who trust Him languish.
Whoso loves Him will rejoice
Exceedingly, holding in his heart
The sovereign and sustainer
Of the Universe.

Nothing has he to do
With remembrance or forgetting.
Neither fulness nor defect
His mind takes note of.
His heart knows
Neither kinship nor estrangement.
By birth and death untouched
Reigns Ramana.

Easy to approach, this gracious guru,
The more you look the more
His comeliness increases.
Sweet to dwell in as the thought-free Heart,
Strong with the strength, the certitude,
Of pure Awareness
Stands this God of ours.

GOD OF GODS

This good Guru, God of gods, this Siva
Whose feet once spurned the once-strong God of Death,
Offers them now as refuge to this wretch,
Stretching a vast expanse of light
Never to be touched by Night.

Those who enter the circle
Countenanced by this endless Silence
Feast on the plenteous joy of stillness,
A fruit beyond the reach or grasp
Of cunning self-deceivers.

In this King's presence where prevails
Mind-transcending Silence which reveals
One's own true self as Siva's splendour vast,
Seekers of Awareness find at last
Their journey's end.

Whoever humbly comes and joins
This congenial home of natural silence,
The Master does not let him droop and pine
But chooses as His bride and makes His own
For happiness eternal.

Having known His Person, by His grace
I have seen the bright, still realm
Of Absolute Oneness.
This Lord of pure Awareness will reveal
Clear in every steady devotee's heart
His own true Self.

THE LIGHT SUPREME

Even this hard heart
Ruled by His grace has learned
To behold and to enjoy
The world's best wealth in His Feet
Which offer to all devotees
Life immeasurably abundant.

To devotees who lay themselves
An outright offering at His Feet
Himself He yields in ample measure
With all attendant grace
Ending every conflict
Of false desires and fears.

The Lord of pure Awareness,
The Light supreme, abolishing
All confusing roles
Of creature and Creator,
Raises me to His high throne
And dwells himself within my heart

Through power of penance and no other means
Can one attain devotion pure
To our most mighty Master
Who without an effort brings
Into the hearts of those who reach Him
Abidance in the Self, one's natural Being
In calm, clear union with the Eternal Goodness.

THE LIVING HEART

Gracious guru living in my heart,
Ever fresh fount of joy that knows no end,
At Your Feet only shall my proud head bend,
On none but You my mind shall meditate,
Nought but Your bounty my song celebrate.
Those who have, with taste and eager zeal,
Raised for all to see this temple of stone,
Should not stop here,
But through a total change of heart
Build too an inner shrine
To this our Lord of Silence.

To my Master who accepts the sacrifice
Of the frisky ram, the restless ego,
And dwells in the temple of the heart,
The only worship one can offer is
Thought-free awareness of pure Being
Merged in Siva.

Spreading afar the light of Self-inquiry,
And enriching each beholder's being to ripeness,
May my Father's Presence in this temple
Serve as the living heart of all earth's creeds
And shine for ever beyond the Sun and Moon.

●

"The cause of your misery is not in the life without; it is in you as the ego."—BHAGAVAN.

●

"To BE the Self that you really are is the only means to realise the Bliss that is ever yours."—SRI MAHARSHI.

●

"Pains are dependent on the ego; they cannot be without the 'I', but 'I' can remain without them."—SRI RAMANA.

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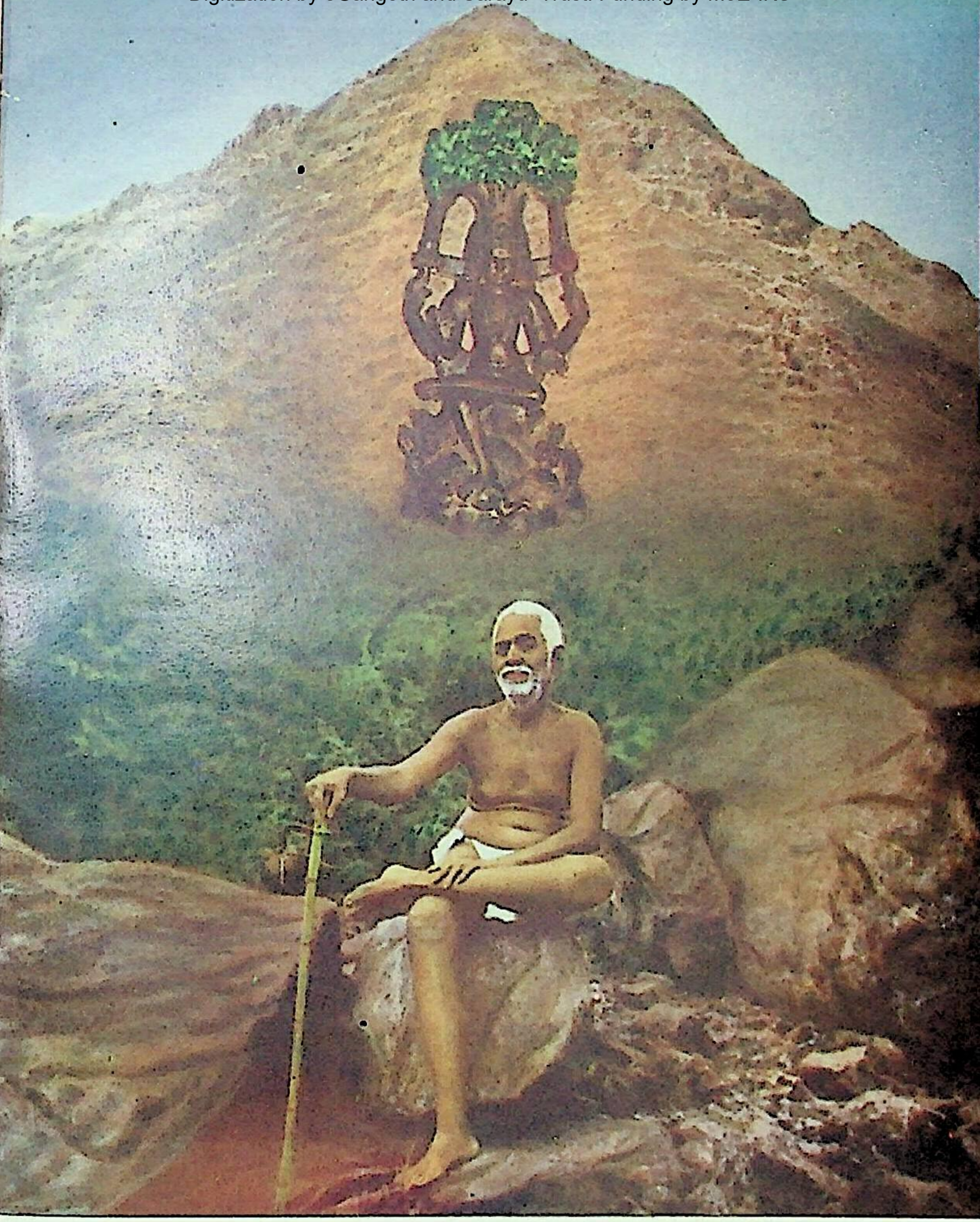
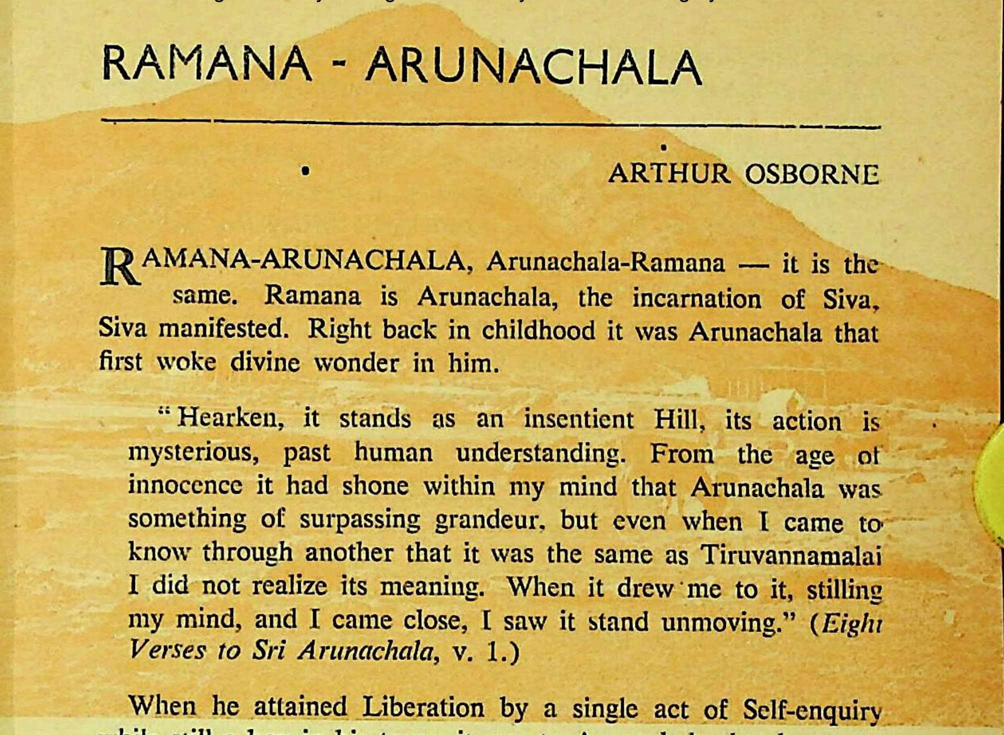


That Shankara (Lord Siva) who appeared as Dakshinamurthi (seated under the Banyan tree) to grant peace to the Great Ascetics (Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanat Kumara and Sanat Sujata), who revealed His real state of Silence . . . abides in me.

— *Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi.*



RAMANA - ARUNACHALA

ARTHUR OSBORNE

RAMANA-ARUNACHALA, Arunachala-Ramana — it is the same. Ramana is Arunachala, the incarnation of Siva, Siva manifested. Right back in childhood it was Arunachala that first woke divine wonder in him.

> "Hearken, it stands as an insentient Hill, its action is mysterious, past human understanding. From the age of innocence it had shone within my mind that Arunachala was something of surpassing grandeur, but even when I came to know through another that it was the same as Tiruvannamalai I did not realize its meaning. When it drew me to it, stilling my mind, and I came close, I saw it stand unmoving." (*Eight Verses to Sri Arunachala*, v. 1.)

When he attained Liberation by a single act of Self-enquiry while still a boy in his teens, it was to Arunachala that he came, leaving his home and family.

> "Didst Thou not call me in? I have come. Now maintain me. Such is Thy burden, Oh Arunachala." (*The Marital Garland of Letters*, v. 94.)

He himself spoke of it as the Supreme. "A, Ru and Na signify Sat, Chit and Ananda or the Supreme Self, the individual self and their union as the One Absolute expressed in the Mahavakya 'That Thou Art'. Achala signifies Perfection. So worship Arunachala of shining golden lustre; for mere remembrance of Him ensures Deliverance." (*The Necklet of Nine Gems*, v. 2.)

Siva is the Supreme, the Destroyer of ignorance and ego; Arunachala represents the direct path on which forms and ritual are unnecessary. The Purana says that within 30 miles of Arunachala no initiation is needed; the old Tamil saying goes that merely to think of Arunachala is enough. And Sri Ramana taught the direct path of Self-enquiry free from all religious forms. The name 'Tiruvannamalai' means 'Supreme Auspicious Mountain'. It is no accident that his Ashram is there, at the foot of Arunachala.

Having arrived at Arunachala as a boy-Sage — Dakshinamurthi, Siva, the youthful Sage teaching in silence — Bhagavan never left it again. But it was many years before his Ashram grew up. Although Realization had come through one single act of Self-enquiry and had remained stabilized ever since, not wavering or intermittent as usually happens, the mortal vehicle needed time to adapt itself to the role of Guru, and for many years he lived in caves and temples on or near Arunachala, avoiding people so far as he could. It was a long while before he accepted permanent followers, and not until 1922, when he was already in his forties, did he come to live at the foot of the hill, where his Ashram now is.

His mother had been living with him at Skandashram, a cave Ashram on the slope of the hill. She died, attaining Liberation in death through his ministrations. The body was buried at the foot of the southern slope of the Hill and he took up his residence there. A thatched shed was put up for him and another over the grave. There was significance in all this. He himself said that it was no decision of his to go and live there, that he felt an inner compulsion, that it was the appropriate, the inevitable thing to do.

For a quarter of a century he had been living on and around Arunachala, complete spiritually but maturing humanly. In the last phase, that of Skandashram, his mother was living there too, as a disciple, and brought a Shakti element to the Ashram. This element centred henceforth at her shrine. The Maharshi ceased now to wander or change abode. The Ashram that grew up around him was the focal centre from which his Grace radiated. He never again left it. He was fully aware of the spiritual centre that was growing up there. He declared that Arunachala was the spiritual centre of the world. His younger brother, Niranjanananda Swami, became the Sarvadhikari or Director of the Ashram and laboured ceaselessly to construct suitable Ashram premises and a temple over the mother's shrine. This was the outer aspect of the work the Maharshi was preparing spiritually in constructing a spiritual centre. From this time his fame began to spread and devotees flocked to him from all over India and from abroad also.

The Sarvadhikari's work was not easy. Especially the construction of the temple went slowly. It was done by master craftsmen working according to the sastras with granite from the hill. Building a temple in such a way is both laborious and expensive, and it was completed only a few months before the Maharshi's mortal journey ended.

About the same time another step was taken also for the perpetuation of this Centre which had now become Ramana-Arunachala. The Maharshi approved of a will drawn up by a number of senior devotees, declaring that the Ashram was to remain a spiritual centre and to be controlled by the Sarvadhikari and his descendants. He not only approved but expressed his views strongly and clearly, as recorded at the time.

Then the time came, APRIL 14TH, 1950, when he left the body and a bright light was seen trailing across the sky to the north-east, to disappear behind the peak of Arunachala. There remained now the Ashram, the Ramana-Arunachala centre he had made so potent. He had said : "They say I am leaving, but where could I go ? I am here." He is 'here' in the spaceless, timeless Eternity of the Spirit ; but he is also here in his Ashram at the foot of Arunachala.

Spiritual influences act through human agencies. A terrifically powerful Presence was felt at his Ashram, but it was up to his followers to canalize and maintain it, to keep it clear and potent. This was and is to be done by continued meditation and prayer. It is done in various ways. It is done through the Sri Chakra Puja that was instituted in the new temple ; it is done through *The Mountain Path*, the quarterly magazine the Ashram has launched. But one essential way it had to be done was by constructing a worthy shrine over the tomb of the Maharshi.

This work could not be taken up at once, as the Ashram suffered a severe material set-back after the Maharshi left the body and struggled through a few lean years. When it became possible to take it up, the work went slowly. For one thing, just as the Sarvadhikari had had to build various Ashram buildings as well as the temple, so his successor, Sri Venkataraman, had to carry out an extensive programme of residential building, as so many visitors began to come here for longer or shorter periods. Also, apart from that, the same tradition was carried on of work by master-craftsmen according to the rules of the Sastras, out of granite-like stone from around Arunachala.

The final completion and consecration of the Shrine therefore marks an epoch in the life of the Ashram. It is no mere dedication of a new building. After Bhagavan left the body, daily pujas with chanting of the Vedas were carried on at his tomb, devotees sitting in meditation the while, as they did in his presence during his lifetime. Some years ago this practice had to be transferred elsewhere owing to the building operations. Now it will be brought back to the completed shrine. All feel that an achievement is being consummated and a new epoch started. May the Grace of the Bhagavan give splendour to it!

◆

In April 1950 Bhagavan was very ill; yet even in this state of utter prostration when unable to sit up, he insisted that all who had come for his 'darshan' must be allowed to have their desire fulfilled. So they were allowed to pass in a queue in front of the room where he was lying. There were always many people in the queue and it was so long that a person had not more than a second or two for his 'darshan'. Even these silent marches past were not without some incident or other, to show how compassionate and alert Bhagavan was. One timid devotee who was never known to have talked to Bhagavan or to sit in the hall anywhere except in the back rows, summoned up courage to throw a slip of paper at the feet of Bhagavan, as he passed along. Bhagavan took the slip, read it and asked for the person to be brought. The attendants fetched him before Bhagavan as though he were a culprit to be reprimanded for breaking discipline. Sri Bhagavan looked him full in the face with a broad and benign smile and nodded assent. The slip contained the words "Bhagavan! Save me."

BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA

T. P. R.

OUR thoughts now are in the context of 'Kumbhabhishekam" that is done for the "Samadhi-Mantapam" of Sri Bhagavan, whereat his worship is to be renewed after final consecration. For more than half-a-century in our own time, a lucky generation had Bhagavan Sri Ramana live and move amidst them, as God Incarnate and a 'Great Splendour' in human form. All aspirants who with steadfast faith and devotion and by token of their own past evolution found their way to his Presence, were permeated by the uplifting influence, vouchsafed by his guidance and compassionate protection. He never posed as a 'Teacher' or 'Guru', although every one felt in him the *Parama-Guru* of all. His 'life' and 'teachings' were inseparable, as by his very existence he radiated his message, without a Mission, emphasising 'Self-Knowledge' as the most immediate and easy means for a revelation of the nature of one's own Being — that what every individual experienced as his 'Self' was but the one same "Supreme self" of all. To realize this, was the purpose of life and solution of its problems. 'Existence' or 'Being' is but one without a second, and all manifestations gross and subtle — as involved in time and space or of names and forms — are only of 'it', itself remaining unaffected. Such an experience is the culmination of 'self-enquiry', an introspective return by the individual, the mind, to its source. So much alone was the 'effort' and what next was for experience and beyond exposition.

On the 14th of April 1950, Sri Bhagavan left his body which now sanctifies the very earth in which it has been laid, over which a Mantapam has been raised. To his devotees, seen externally, every sod of earth he has trodden on or touched is sacred and a shrine for worship. More than this, the fact remains that of his own benign Grace and compassion on us, lest we falter and forget, our Divine Father and Mother has implanted Himself, inextricably and for ever, in our hearts. Prostrations to His Lotus Feet!

THE SAGE'S BODY

DR. T. N. KRISHNASWAMI

OWING to my busy life in Madras I could usually spend only a day or a part of a day at Tiruvannamalai when I went there. I always took my camera with me and I used to spend the whole time with the Maharshi and take as many photos of him as I could. I was afraid he would get annoyed at my persistance, but he never did. I have photographed him walking, sitting, eating, wiping his feet. I have caught him smiling and laughing, speaking and silent, and also in samadhi. Once he was going up the Hill when it started to rain and he was offered a home-made palm-leaf umbrella and I snapped him using it. I took another picture of him using an ordinary umbrella and smiling broadly as he did so.

Sometimes I used to wonder if it was not ridiculous of me to pay so much attention to photography when his teaching was that " I am not the body ". Was I not chasing the shadow and even trying to perpetuate it? At the time I paid very little attention to his teaching. I was attracted only by the beauty and grace of his person. It gave me immense pleasure to take pictures of him. He was more important than his teaching.

Later, when he was no longer bodily with us, I turned to his teaching; and then I found that the Grace of his Presence had prepared me for it. I had been attracted to him as a child is to its mother, without knowing why, and I had derived sustenance from him as a child does from its mother. I was glad afterwards that I had enjoyed his Presence so fully when he was bodily with us. The following little incident shows how he himself approved of people worshipping the physical form assumed by the Divine.

One day I was walking on Arunachala with the Maharshi when he stopped and picked up a small stone from the path and held it out to me saying : " Some one from abroad has written asking for a stone from the most sacred part of the Hill. He does not know that the whole Hill is sacred. It is Siva Himself. Just as we identify ourselves with a body, so Siva has chosen to identify Himself with the Hill. Arunachala is pure Wisdom in the form of a hill. It is out of compassion to those who seek Him that He has chosen to reveal Himself in the form of a hill visible to the eye. The seeker will obtain guidance and solace by staying near this Hill."

TO ALL MANKIND

PROF. EKNATH EASWARAN

SAYS the Mundaka Upanishad: "The sage knows Brahman, the support of all, the pure effulgent being in whom is contained the universe. They who worship the sage, and do so without thought of self, cross the boundary of birth and death."

Such a sage is Sri Ramana Maharshi. In loving him, in meditating upon him, we are all loving the Supreme Reality that is enshrined in the depths of our consciousness. May we, his humble devotees, love him more and more, meditate upon him more and more, and be enabled through his grace to cross the boundary of birth and death.

While Sri Ramana Maharshi is the beloved Guru to hundreds of us who are devoted to him, it appears to me that he is of utmost importance to all humanity. A great sage such as Bhagavan, by the very act of living on earth, elevates the level of consciousness of all mankind; and every one in every part of the world may thus be said to benefit spiritually from Bhagavan's life and teachings.

●

"Self-enquiry by following the clue of *Aham-vritti* is just like the dog tracing its master by his scent. The master may be at some distant, unknown place, but that does not at all stand in the way of the dog tracing him." — BHAGAVAN.

FIRST IMPACT

N. N. RAJAN

IT was a fine sunny morning when I first entered the hall with a local friend who had come as my guide. Sri Ramana Maharshi was seated on his couch, looking majestic, I might even say divine, though quite unostentatious. He was as motionless as a statue. We prostrated before him and took our seats on the floor in front of him, along with a few others. There was something radiant about his face which spontaneously captivated me. The whole atmosphere was charged with dynamic silence and ineffable peace — not a mere quietness but a vibrant, living peace. I had no special craving for spiritual guidance ; I had gone only as a casual visitor to pay my respects to a great soul. My intention was only to sit there for a few minutes to show my respect, but I was fixed to my seat, almost petrified, for three quarters of an hour. Even if I had wanted to talk to him about anything I could not have done so, because I was sitting spellbound. Visitors were coming and going, all in silence. I vaguely sensed the uneasiness of my friend, who was wondering how he could get me away, and at last I reluctantly got up and left after again prostrating to the Maharshi. Once outside, my friend impatiently asked me why I had sat there for so long, but I evaded giving a reply and spoke of other things. I did not know what to say.

Years later, when I had become a devotee, heart and soul, I saw another example of this strange magnetism which the Maharshi exerted. Once my daughter, who was only two years old, was sitting quietly, cross-legged, in a corner of the hall, away from her mother and myself and remained like that for about two hours. We did not particularly notice it, but the Maharshi did. When I went to the hall early next morning it was a pleasure to hear him telling the story to one of the devotees. He repeated it a number of times as fresh people came in and particularly emphasised the words " sitting motionless ".

NEW WORDS FOR OLD

S. S. COHEN

THE distinguished qualities which impressed those who gathered round Sri Ramana Bhagavan throughout his long career as a spiritual teacher appeared in him from the day he started to instruct.

Although he was not then of an age to handle philosophical books, or move among learned pandits, the highest truth flowed from him with the clarity and spontaneity which would have done honour to the great Masters of the Upanishads. His listeners were convinced that he spoke as he " saw ", and saw through life what he first unexpectedly experienced when he was still in his teens.

He taught the eternal Advaita Vedanta in a language which modern man can understand, reviving old terms which had lost much of their meaning and giving a new meaning to others. In *Ramana Gita* (original edition), for instance, he defines *sahaja* as " Inherence in the Self notwithstanding contact with the world," and the much-misunderstood *Nirvikalpa* as " Abstract consciousness withdrawn from such contact." (V. 10). To *Tapas* he gave an entirely novel meaning : " Fixity in the primal state is the most excellent *tapas* . . . . . He who is fixed in the Self is in automatic and incessant *tapas* " (IX, 17/18), which implies that true *tapas* begins only after Self-realization from which he himself never wavered. He lived by this definition, which lent a supreme validity to his teaching and sanctity to his person, as the real Guru, the Lord in flesh and blood.

" And the Word was God."

●

" Bhagavan, is it not indulgence in rhetoric when you say, *Karunaa poorna sudhaabdhi* (O! thou ocean of Grace infinite)? Where is the Grace when we see misery and suffering all over the world ? "

" No, it is just plain, absolute Truth. You must understand the nature of suffering. Is it not Grace that ' It ' never abandons you ? Even if you want to, ' It ' will not ".

BHAGAVAN AS THE SUN OF SELF-REALISATION

M. P. PANDIT

IT is said that the roads to the Truth are many and the directing principles of the journey are correspondingly varied. Be that as it may, there is a basic imperative which is common to all the paths : to know the truth of oneself before one can proceed to know the truth of the world. What is the truth that underlies my being, where is it to be found and how is to be realised ? Bhagavan's teaching is the most direct instruction on the subject in modern times. His own life is a perfect embodiment of this Truth-realisation. The Truth, says the Seer, is within myself. But what is myself ? Am I the body or am I the conglomeration of feelings and sensations that take birth every moment and express themselves or am I the mind of which I am aware as thoughts ? None of these but that which supports all of them. There is, at the core of the system which I call myself, an indefinable substratum which the Upanishads term the self ; this self in me is, so to say, an individuation of the greater Self that is the basic Truth of the cosmos. To perceive the self within me and find my way to it is not only to realise the Truth that gives meaning to my life but also to identify myself with the Truth of All.

This self, says Bhagavan, as do men of Knowledge everywhere, is to be found and realised in the heart-centre. No doubt the self is everywhere, but it is most easily reached at its station behind the chest. How to reach it ? Withdraw the mind from its thousand preoccupations in the sense-world and set it on the quest, WHO AM I ? This discipline of meditation and deliberation clears the consciousness of much of the load of mental distractions and turns its face inward. Each exercise digs a level deeper in the being till the pull of the innermost Entity claims the entire person. The true Individuai displaces the fleeting makeshift that I call myself. This experience is to be stabilised and organised into the permanent state of *jivanmukti*.

WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

DOUGLAS E. HARDING

LET us celebrate this occasion by taking Maharshi seriously, and cease pretending that we cannot see Who we are, right now.

> The Self is within each one's experience every moment.
> No aids are needed to know it.
> There is nothing so simple as being the Self.
> We think there is something hiding our Reality and that it must be destroyed before Reality is gained.
> It is ridiculous! A great game of pretending!
> What are you waiting for? The thought 'I have not seen', the expectation to see and the desire to get something, are all workings of the ego......
> Be yourself and nothing more.
> This thought of difficulty is the chief obstacle.
>
> (*Talks*, pp. 99, 104, 116, 153, 177, 236.)

If we wish to know the truth, if we are interested enough to find out whether we are really the body or not, we have only to look, without any further delay whatever, at the Spot we occupy. If we are secretly afraid of the truth, and do not wish to see Who we are, we shall find excellent reasons for continuing to overlook the Looker. We may even persuade ourselves that we are all the better devotees for ignoring the Master's clear instructions!

The fact is not what we cannot see, but that we are determined not to see, the Obvious. We are frightened of disappearing. Once admit this, and we are at least half way towards overcoming our fear. And really, of course, there is nothing to fear. In the very same instant when one sees one is nothing, one sees that one is all.

DISCOVERY

MISS SARAH FARRAND

YOU opened a book and saw the photo of a man which made your heart stand still — not extraordinary of feature, not unusual in bearing, but something deeper than thought recognised what thought could not, and tears came unbidden. You turned the pages and began to read and could not stop. So all of your life had been leading to this, had been a prelude to, a preparation for, this — to finding the teachings and grace of Ramana Maharshi. The central fact of the book sounded deceptively simple and yet you were stirred to your depths just to read of it — that as a 17-year-old boy, when most boys are interested only in school and play, he realised his true nature to be Deathless Spirit. These two words even now, in the stillness of contemplation, send shivers down your spine and tears spilling from your eyes. He lived for 70 years a life of the utmost purity, simplicity, joy : and pondering over it filled you too with joy. The meaning of your own life began to reveal itself ; it was as if fresh, sparkling rainwater had penetrated to the deepest roots of your being. The path to liberation was clearly described and you only had to surrender to it, follow it to the end, until the moment when there would no longer be Guru, devotee, world but only Deathless Spirit.

Fortunate beyond measure are we who have been drawn to him. Blessed must be his newly consecrated shrine.

Bhagavan, we praise thee !

●

One old devotee known for his child-like simplicity and intense devotion was at his evening prayers. One of his friends pulled him up to join the queue as it was almost ending. He hurried past continuing his prayers, muttering them to himself. When he was just in front of Bhagavan, Bhagavan remarked "The sun is setting". The almost inaudible words that he was just then chanting were "Oh, Thou, Rising Sun. . ." They were in Persian language from the *Zend-Avesta* !

"TAKE NO THOUGHT WHAT YE SHALL SAY"

KUNJU SWAMI

ON one occasion I asked Bhagavan to permit me to study Vedantic books in order that I might answer the questions which used to be put to me by learned sadhus in the course of my visits to various *maths*. I thought that inability to answer such questions would cast a slur on Sri Bhagavan and his Ashram.

After a prolonged silence Bhagavan said: "This study is enough. Look at me. I have not studied all the books, but when a question is put to me earnestly the answer comes to my mind at once without any effort. If no answer comes I do not say anything. All studies are covered by abiding in the Self."

Needless to say I lost all further interest in studies!

●

The reactions of Sri Bhagavan to physical pain were always a mystery to me. I asked him if it was true that he once had (as I was told by a friend) boiling rice gruel (kanji) spilt over his posterior and that Sri Bhagavan knew about it only some time after. He narrated the incident thus:

"I was straining the kanji from a vessel in which rice was boiled. I was sitting on the floor. The boiling kanji was to be collected in a smaller vessel on the floor, but I was talking to some one and without my noticing the kanji fell on the floor, not in the vessel. As the floor sloped towards me, it got under my posterior. I knew about it only afterwards when it got cool."

"Of course I got blistered and Zam Buck was later applied. No doubt there was pain after it was noticed, but who cares?"

The Bliss of Self-Realization perhaps drowns any other experience!

BHAGAVAN'S SPIRITUAL EFFULGENCE

N. BALARAMA REDDI

COMMENTING on *Brahma-Sutra,* 3-2-17, Shankara cites a passage from *Sruti* (not traced in the extant Upanishads) to the effect that questioned by Bashkali, Badhva taught Brahman through silence, अवचनेनैव ब्रह्म प्रोवाच. Bashkali asked Badhva : "Sir, teach me Brahman". Badhva kept silent. Pressed for the second and third time, Badhva answered : "I teach, indeed, but you do not understand. The Self is free from duality — उपशान्तोऽयमात्मा." — That is to say that the Self is taught best through Silence.

Such was the method of instruction often employed by the Maharshi, who was in the authentic tradition of the Upanishads. There issued from him a ceaseless flow of grace and light and peace, affecting in varying measure all those who approached him with faith and aspiration. Not much scope was left for discussion in his liberating presence, which seemed to remind the seeker in the manner of the Upanishad that his first and foremost business was to know the Self and give up all other talk.

तमेवैकं जानथ आत्मानं, अन्या वाचो विमुञ्चथ ।

In the luminous proximity of the sage brimming with peace, thought lost its restless force, the mind calmed down, and a mood of meditation caught the aspirant. Referring to his state he once remarked that for one established in it, to *think* would be as difficult as for the normal man *not to think.*

Speaking of *Jivanmuktas,* a minor Upanishad declares that not for a moment are they devoid of Brahman-awareness, and mentions Brahma, Sanaka, Suka and the like as examples.

Of this illustrious band was Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, a veritable Sun of Self-Knowledge in the spiritual firmament of India for over half a century.

THE LIGHT OF ARUNACHALA

N. R. KRISHNAMOORTHY IYER

IN one of his songs Sri Ramana declares himself the Pure Awareness of the SELF shining in the Heart of all living beings from Lord Hari down to the smallest creature. Ramana's body is now enshrined in Sri Ramanasramam.

Ramana locates the spiritual Heart on the '*dakshina*' side of the body. In Sanskrit, *dakshina* means the right side as also the southern side. Since the body of Ramana lies buried at the southern slope of Arunachala Hill, we can conclude the Samadhi of Ramana to be the Heart-Centre of Arunachala Siva.

The Sanskrit name Dakshinamurthi is compounded of two words *Dakshina* and *Amurthi*. *Dakshina* has a double meaning, on the right side, as well as omnipotent. *Amurthi* means the Formless. So, Dakshinamurthi is the Formless, Omnipotent SELF on the right side (Heart). Thus it is clear that Ramana is the embodiment of Dakshinamurthi, the foremost of Sadgurus.

The ego and breath of unregenerate persons leave the body at the time of death. In the case of a *Mukta-purusha* like Ramana the ego and breath have been completely absorbed into the luminous SELF in the Heart on the right side of the body. So, Ramana ever abides as the SELF in his body now buried under his shrine.

Sri Ramana's words 'Where can I go? I am here!' ring true for all time. The spiritual radiance charged with blissful peace continues to flow from his body in samadhi as before.

●

"What is the difference between a *jivanmukta* and a *videhamukta*?" I asked. "Nothing" replied Bhagavan. "Our sastras and scriptures are only for the unenlightened. A *jnani* has no doubts, sees nobody outside the Self. For the ignorant, the Self has to be spoken of in a language he understands. He sees differences and so he has to be told that the *jnani* whom he sees living in a body is a *jivanmukta* and that one who appears to have cast off the body is a *videhamukta*. But he is ever the same."

'UPADESA SARAM'

G. L. N.

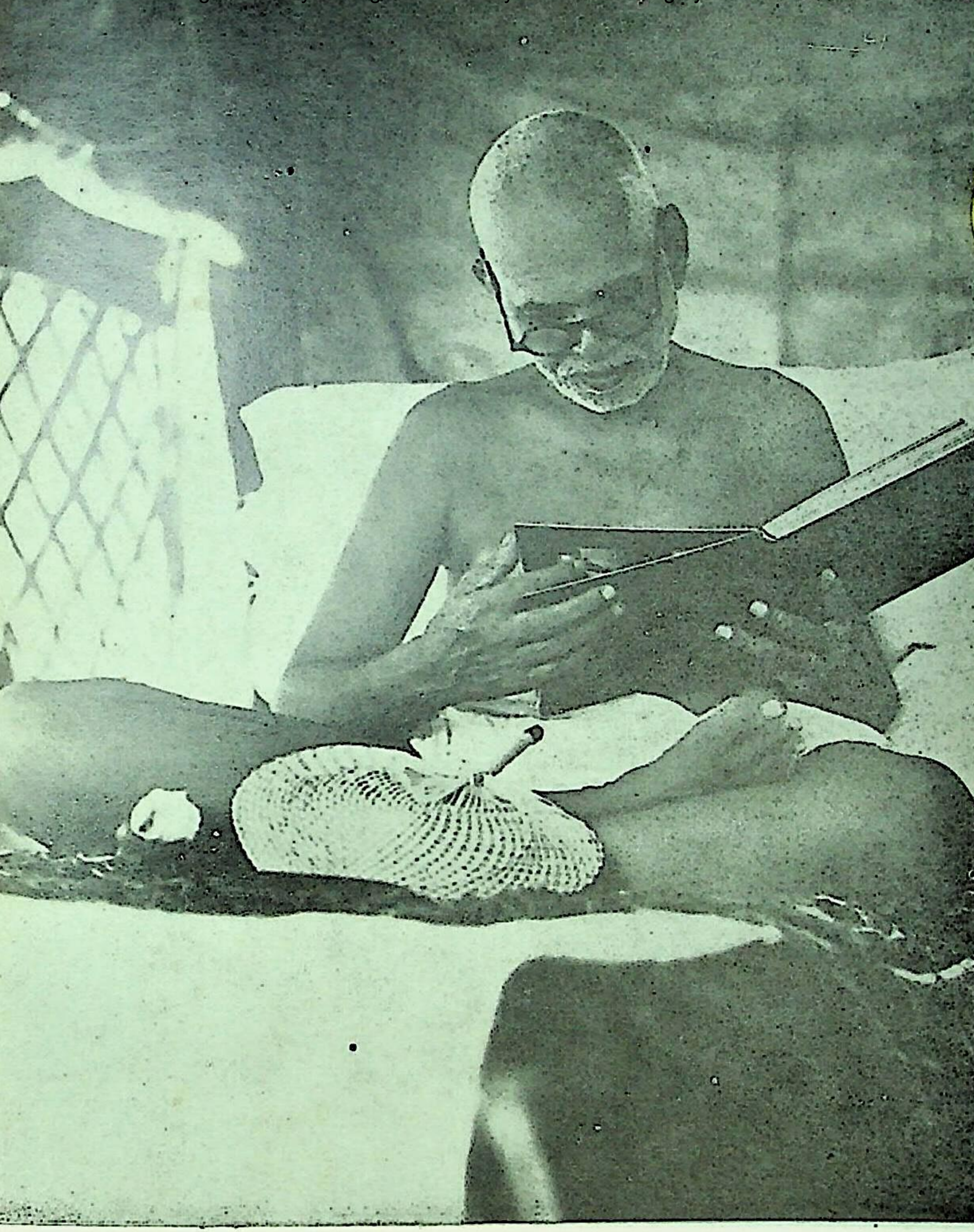
THIS short work is the essence of the science of SELF. It begins with the *karta* (subjective) aspect of Self. The subject is first approached as Ishwara (God) and finally realised as Being-Knowledge-Self.

Sri Bhagavan reveals that it is at the behest of Ishwara that actions give results. Actions are not divine but insentient. The results also are transient and land us in an ocean of activity and do not give salvation. Only actions done without attachment and the results dedicated to God purify the mind and lead to the right path.

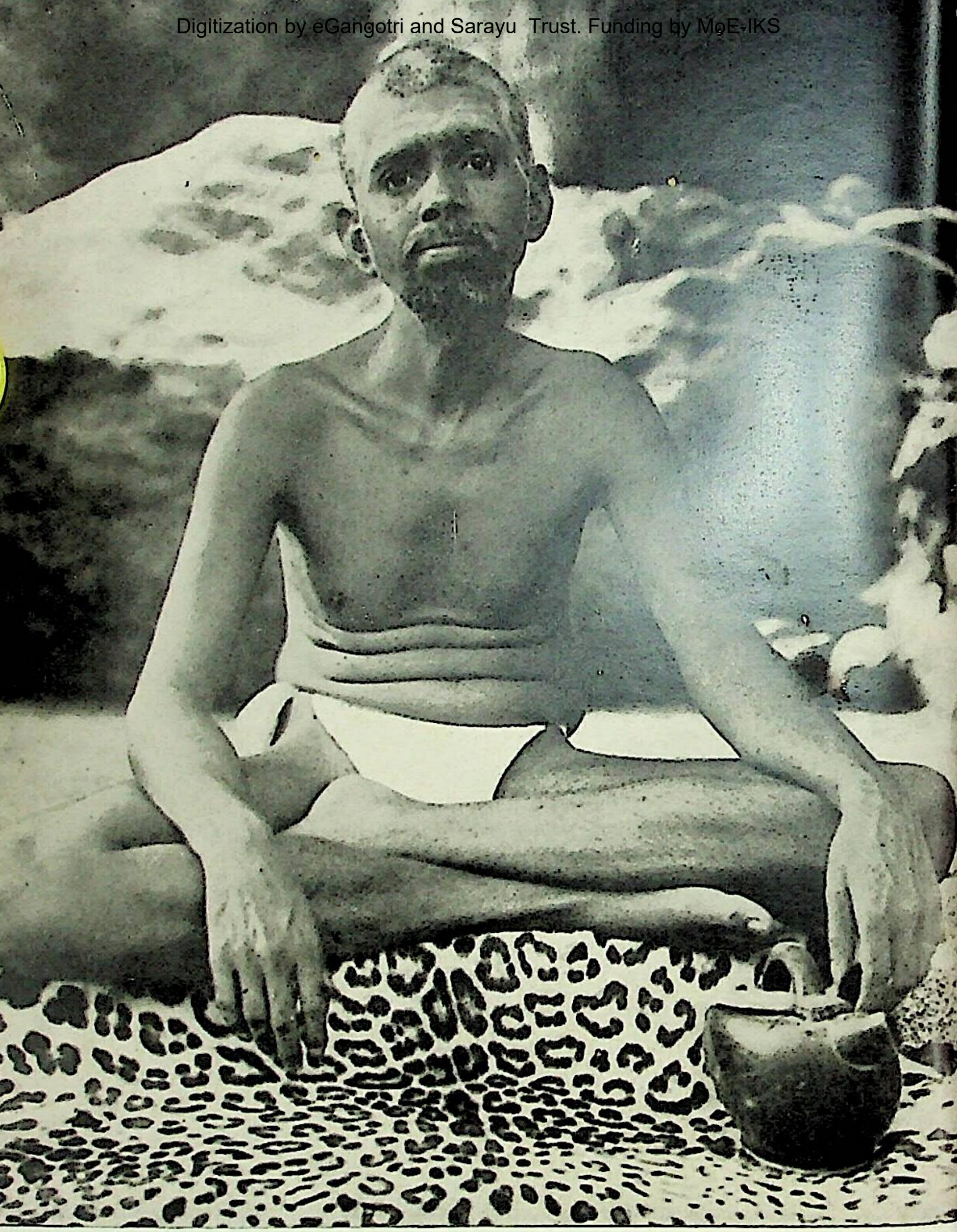
Then the paths are dealt with. By Bhakti or devotion to God. bodily acts of worship lead to continuous meditation on the object of worship, gradually from with form to without form. then to oneness with God and when even that thought disappears. it results in continuous awareness of being, known as *Parābhakti*.

Jnana Marga, the direct path, consists in the mind pondering over its own nature, without attachment to worldly objects. Then one realises that there is no such thing as mind. It is only a bundle of thoughts, the first being the 'I' thought. When it is traced to its source, it is destroyed. In its place shines the perfect and eternal Being as 'I'-'I'. To know this Being (Existence), there is no other knowledge, for knowledge also has to exist before it can know. Existence alone is knowledge and the existing knowledge is the Self.

By the inherent characteristic of existence, jiva (individual ego) and Ishwara (universal ego) are one only, the Self — difference comes only when known as attributes of Self. When one traverses the attributes and knows the Self, it is knowing the truth of Ishwara, the self-effulgent Self. Knowing the Self is being the Self, for there are no two selves for one to know the other.



It was a blessed morning, it was a blessed day,
When Bhagavan came to earth to show the Way!
Hail, hail to Thee Bhagavan a thousand hails,
To know Thee in essence intellectual fails!



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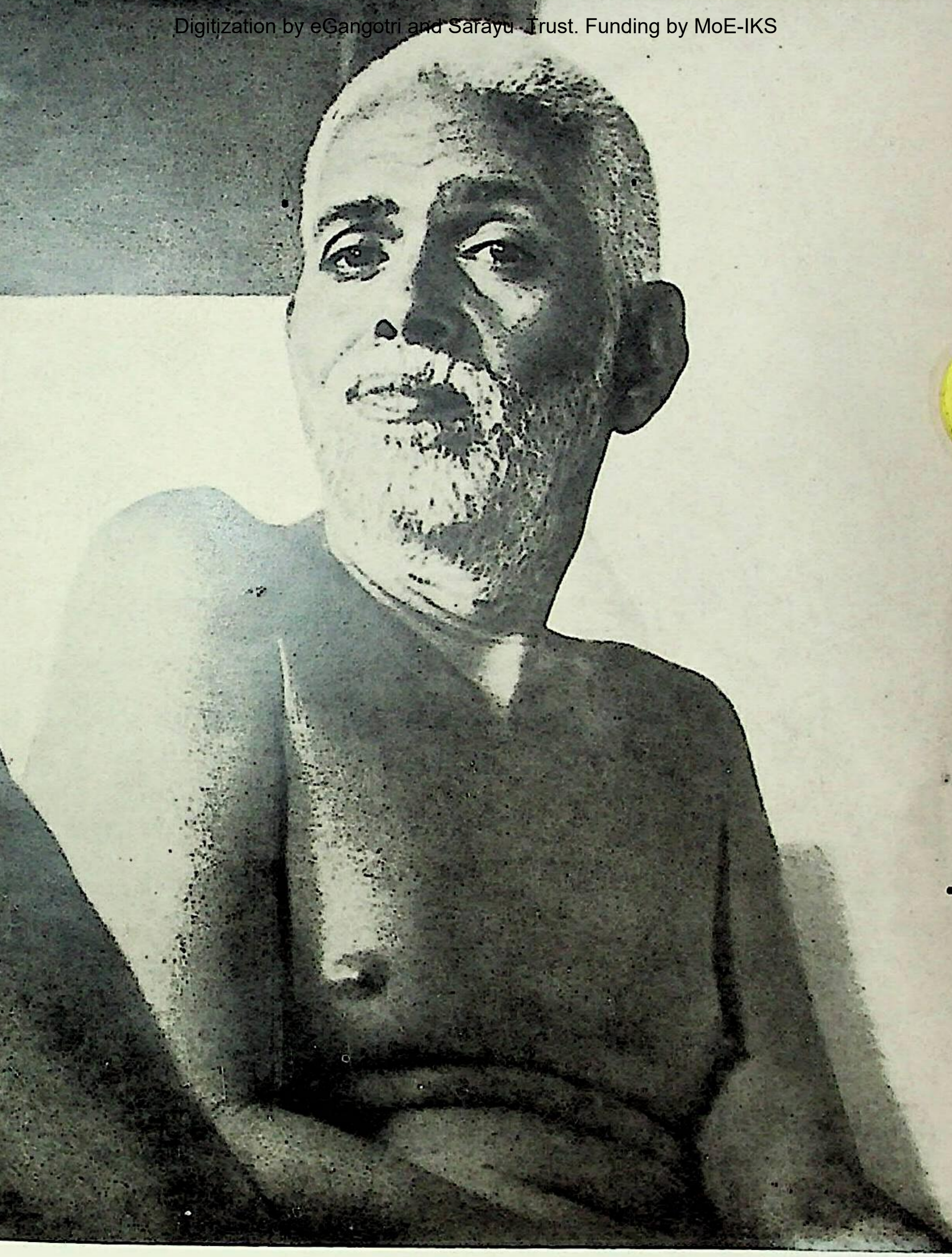

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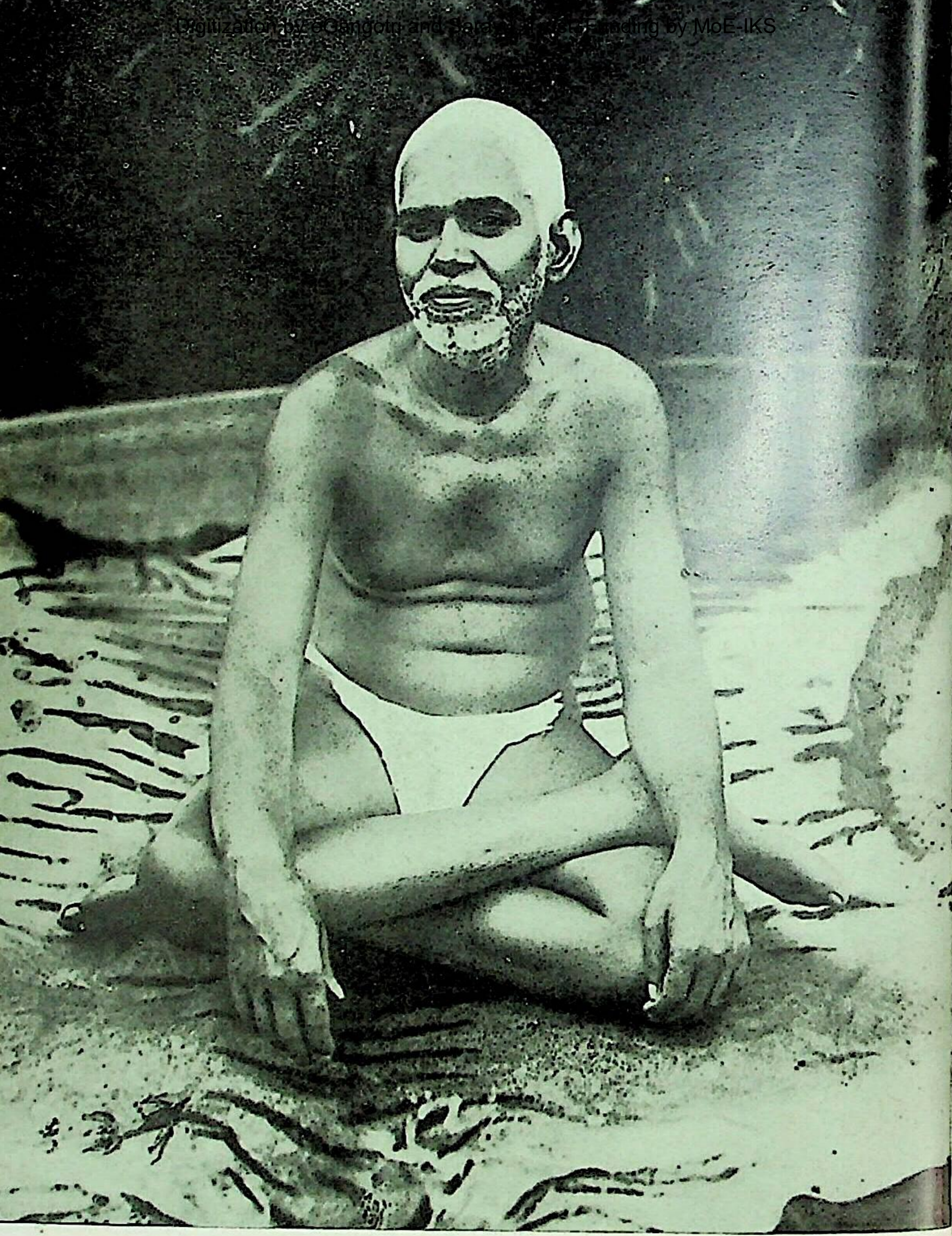

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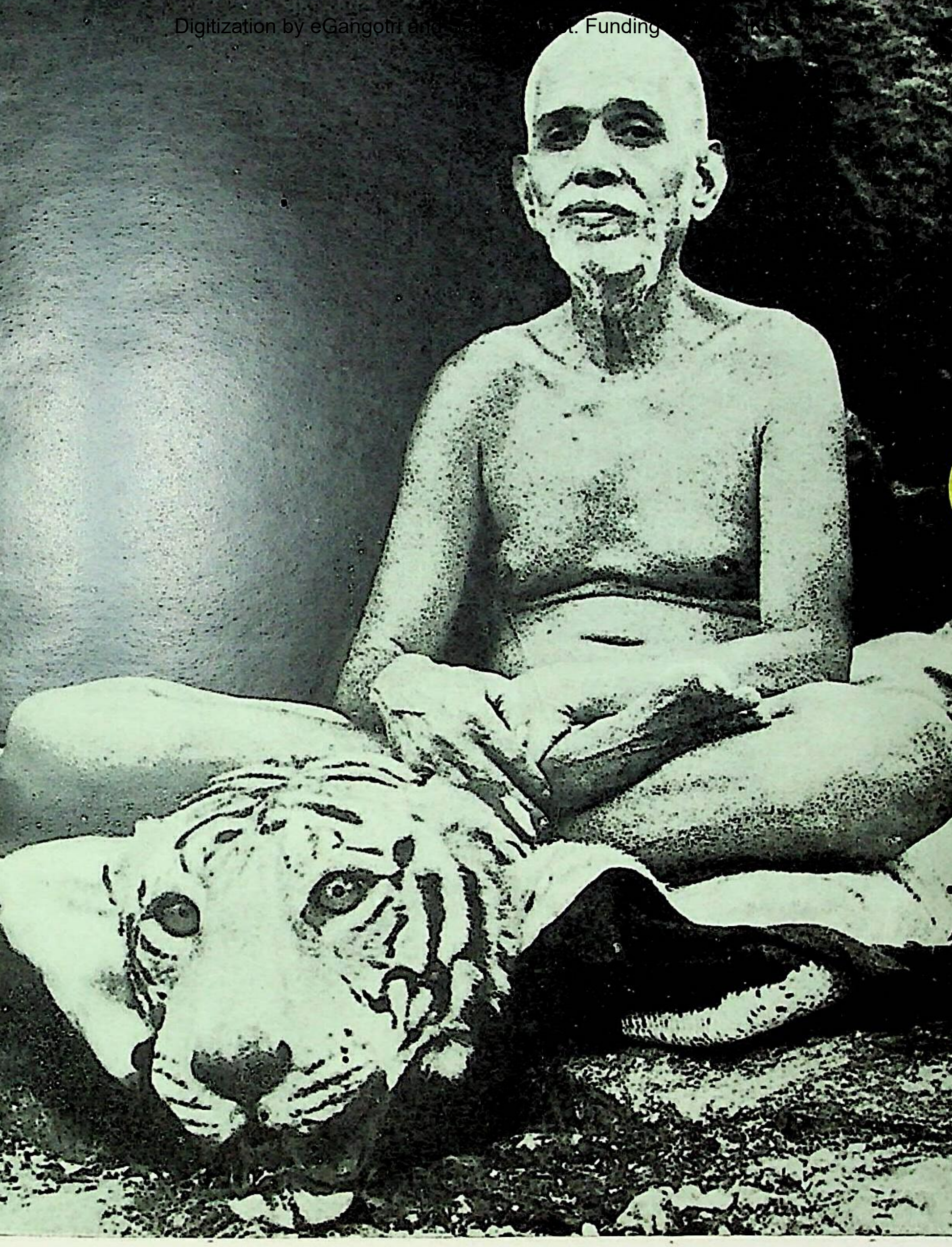

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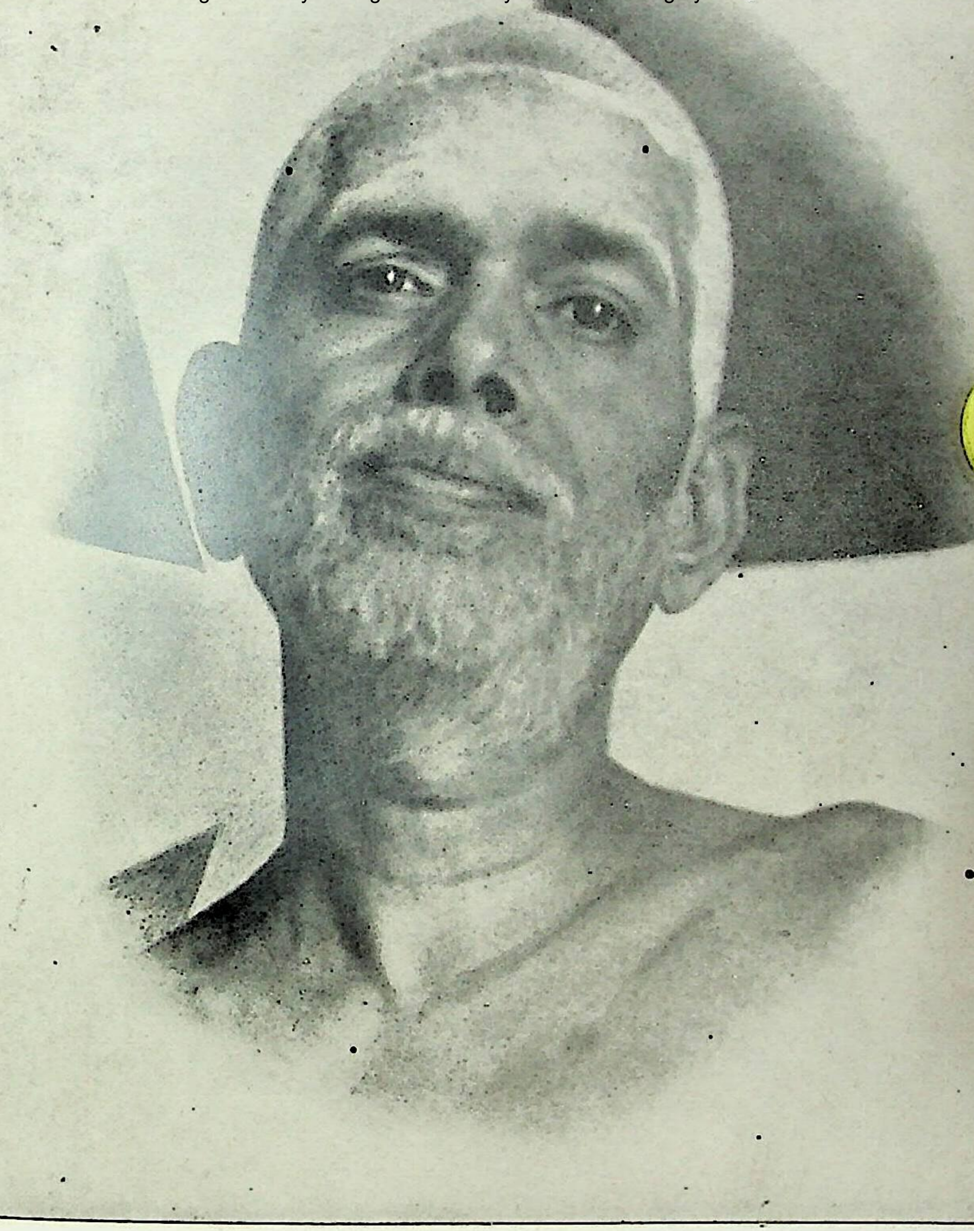

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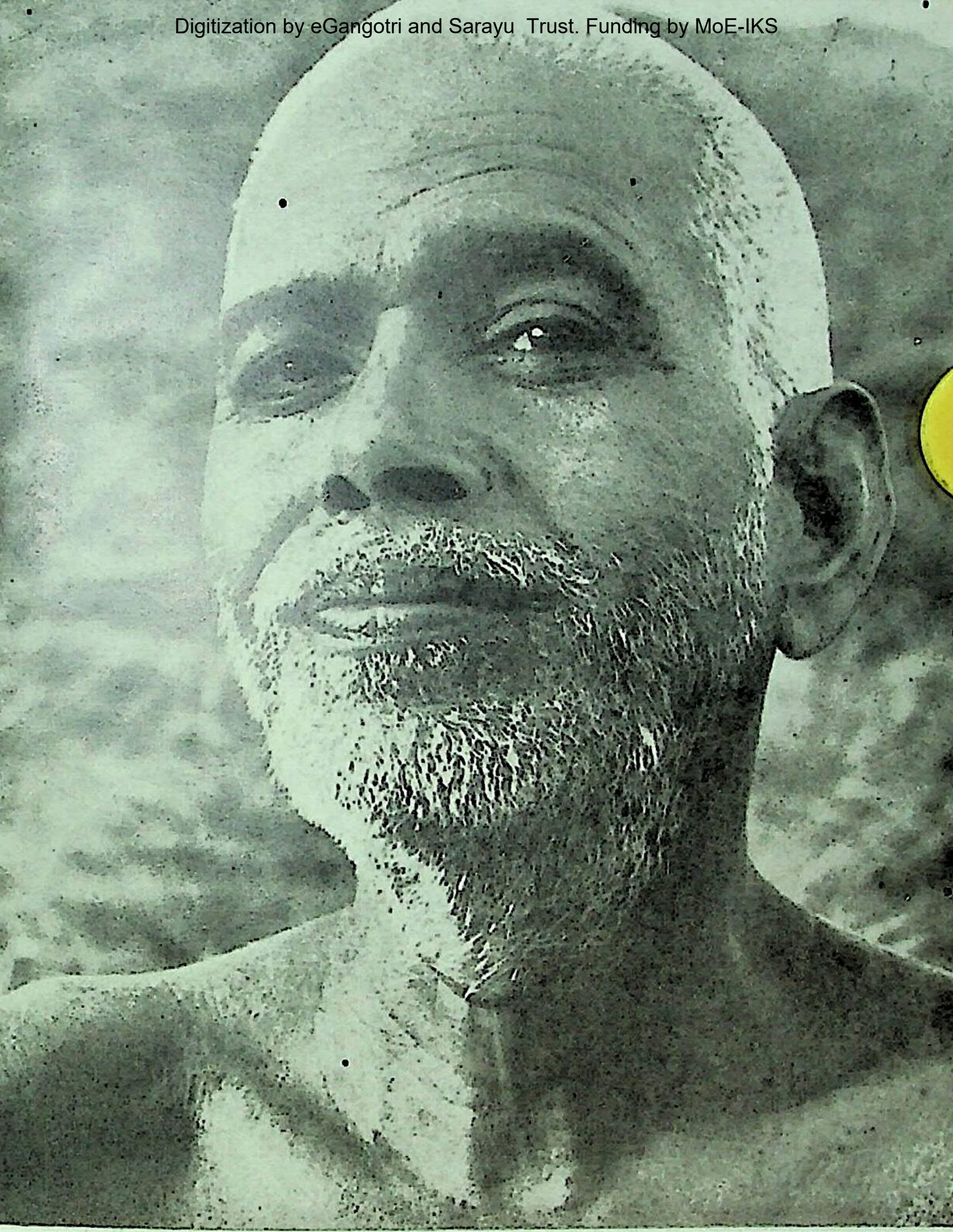

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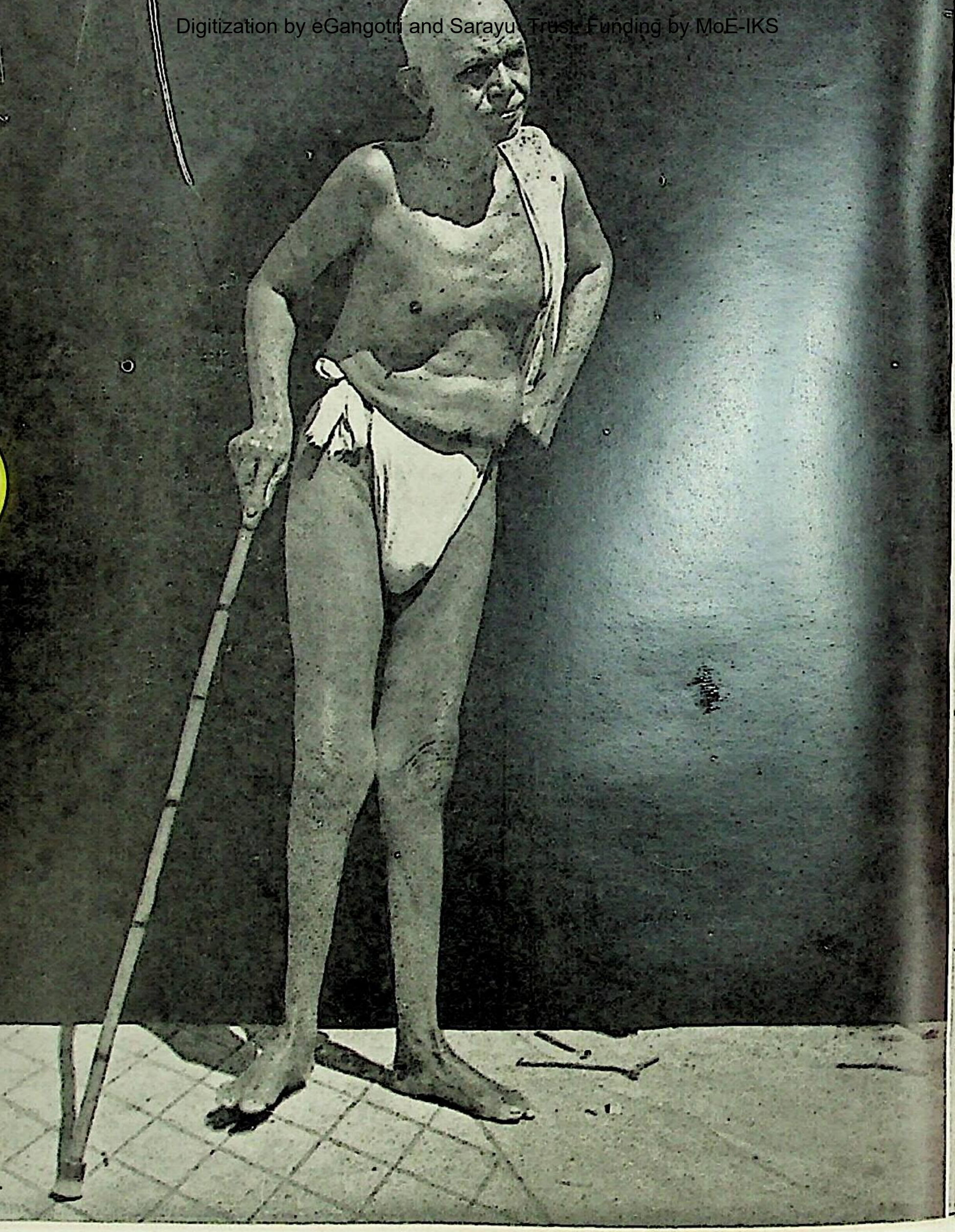

May Sri Bhagavan's benign grace be on all!

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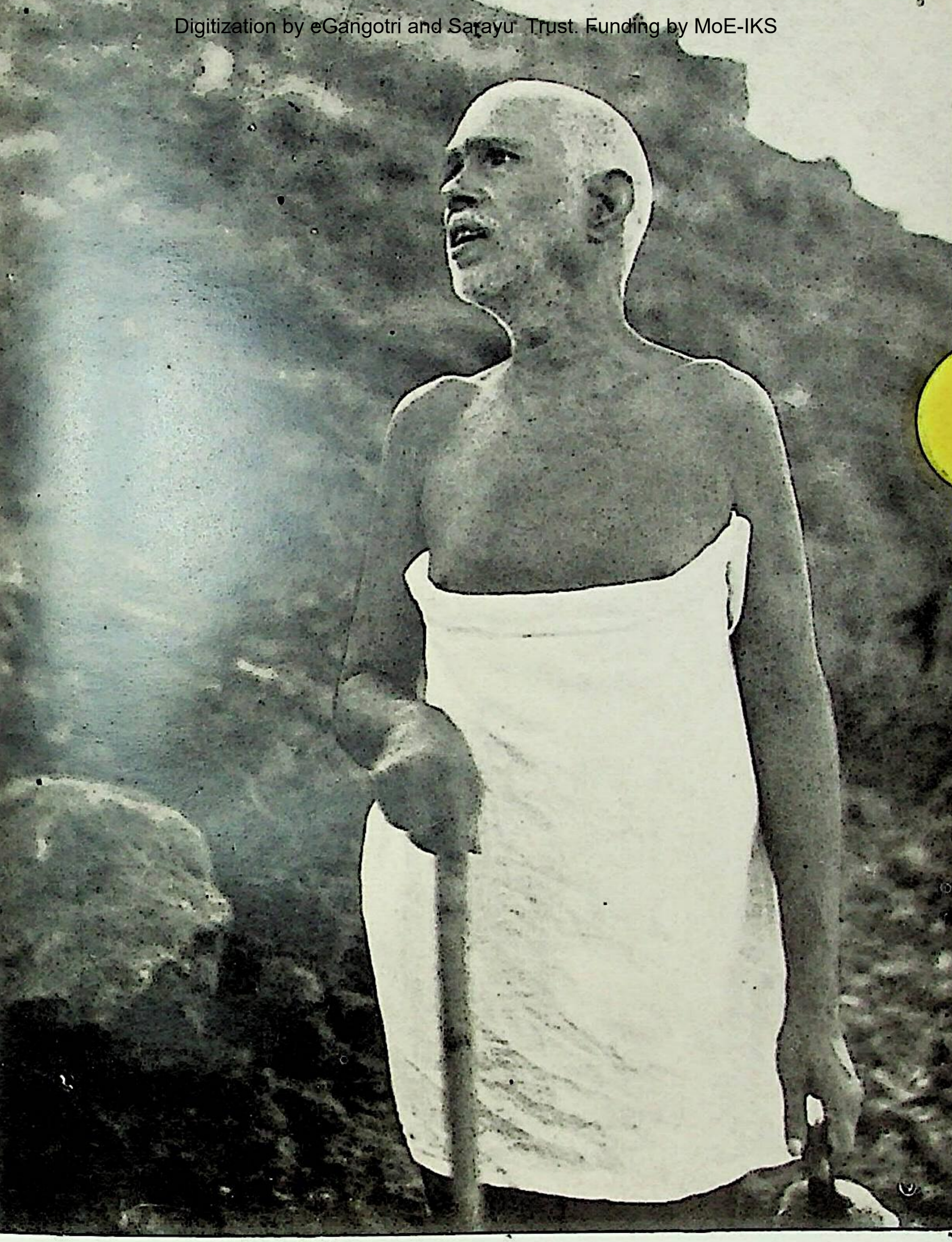

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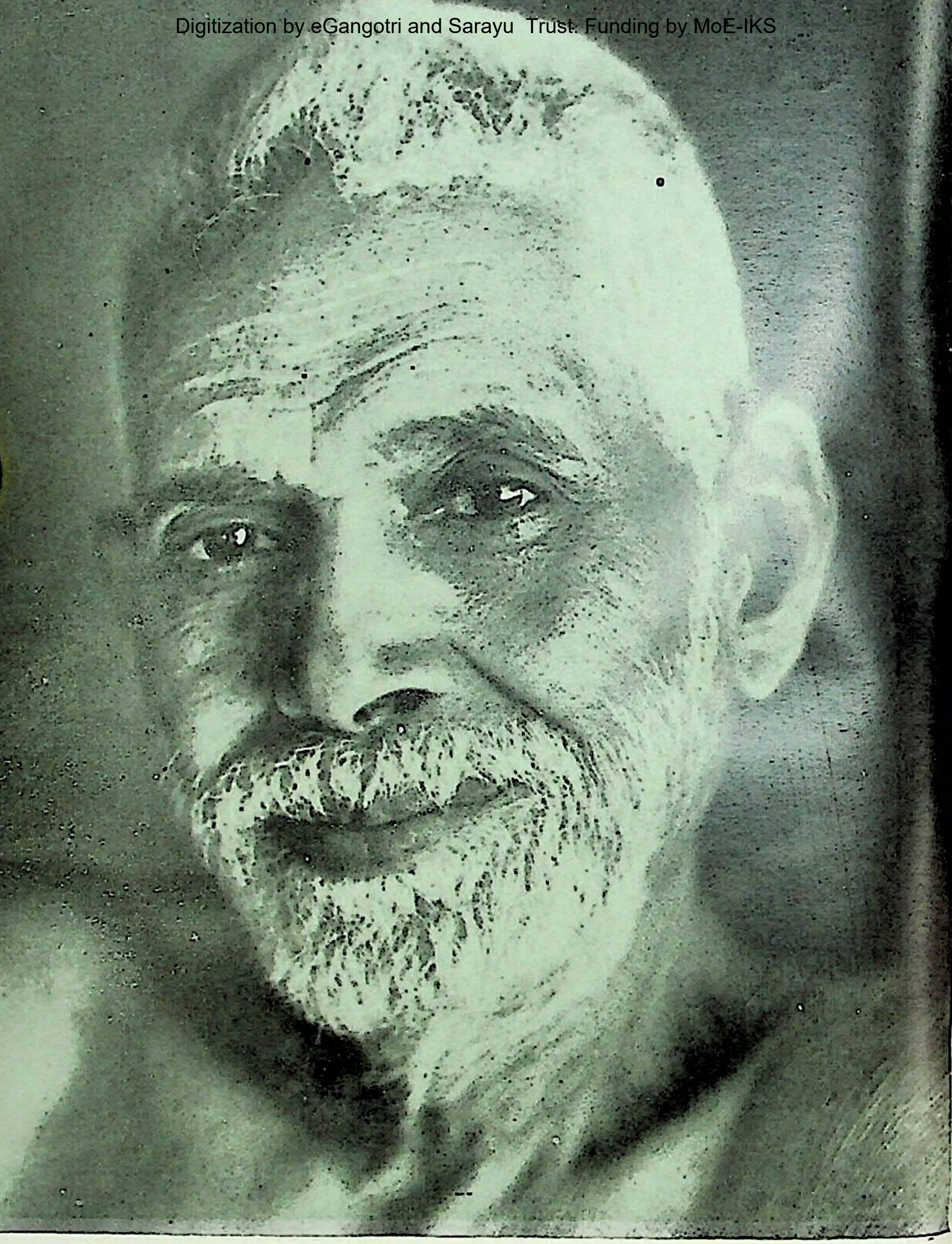

यच्चिन्ता स्थिरमुक्त्यै ब्रह्मैतद्रमणाख्यम् ।
मामावृत्य समन्तांदानन्दे निदधातु ॥

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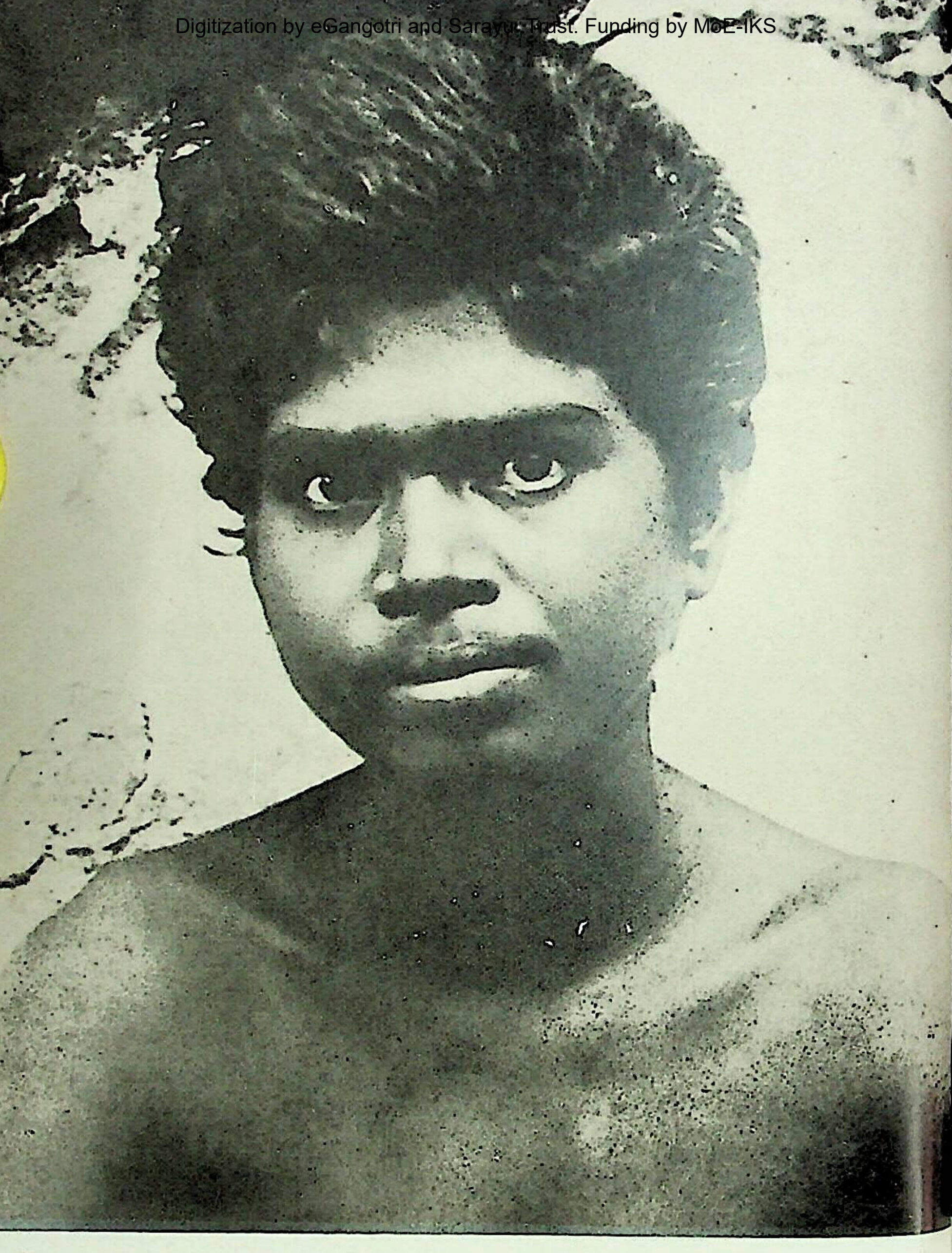

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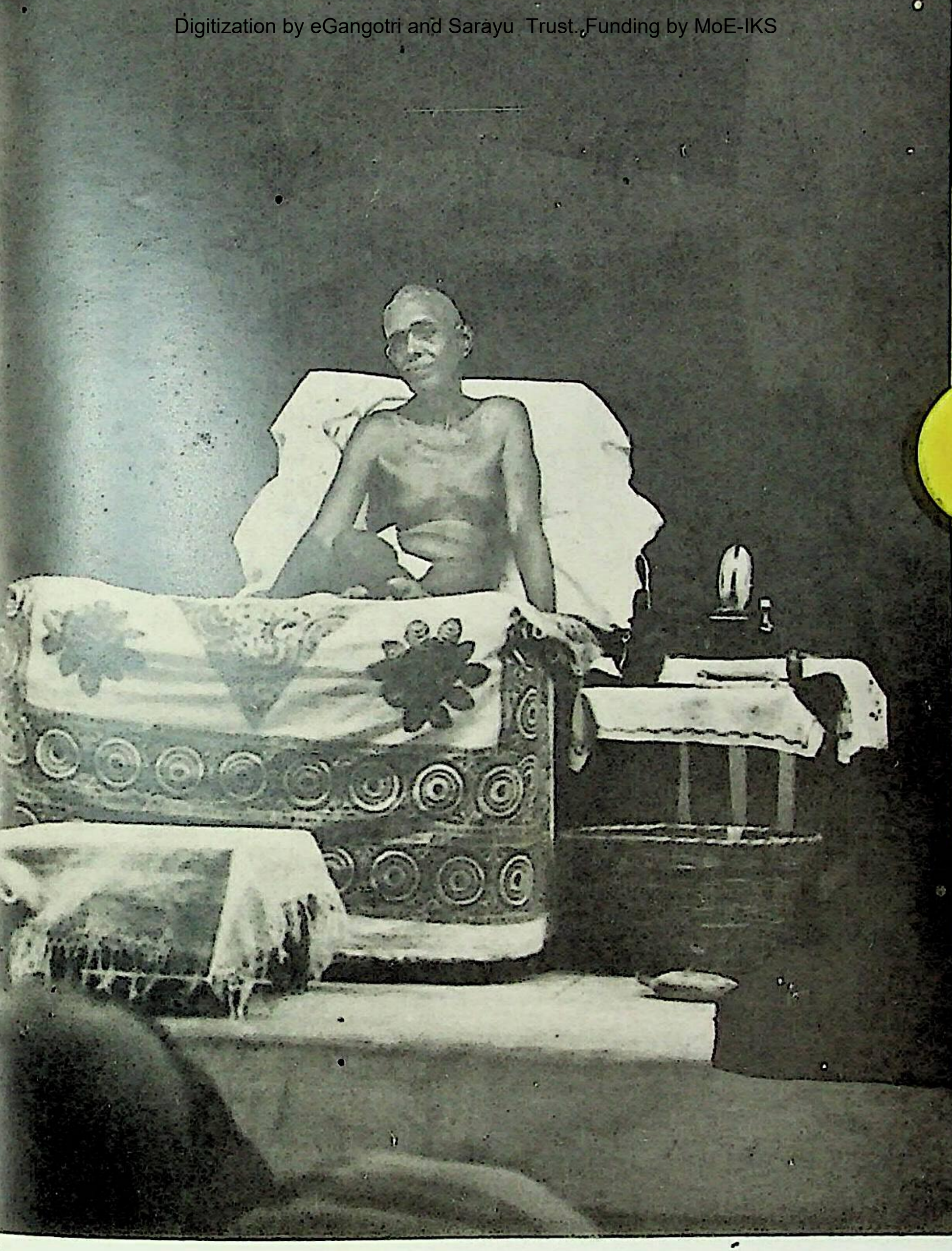

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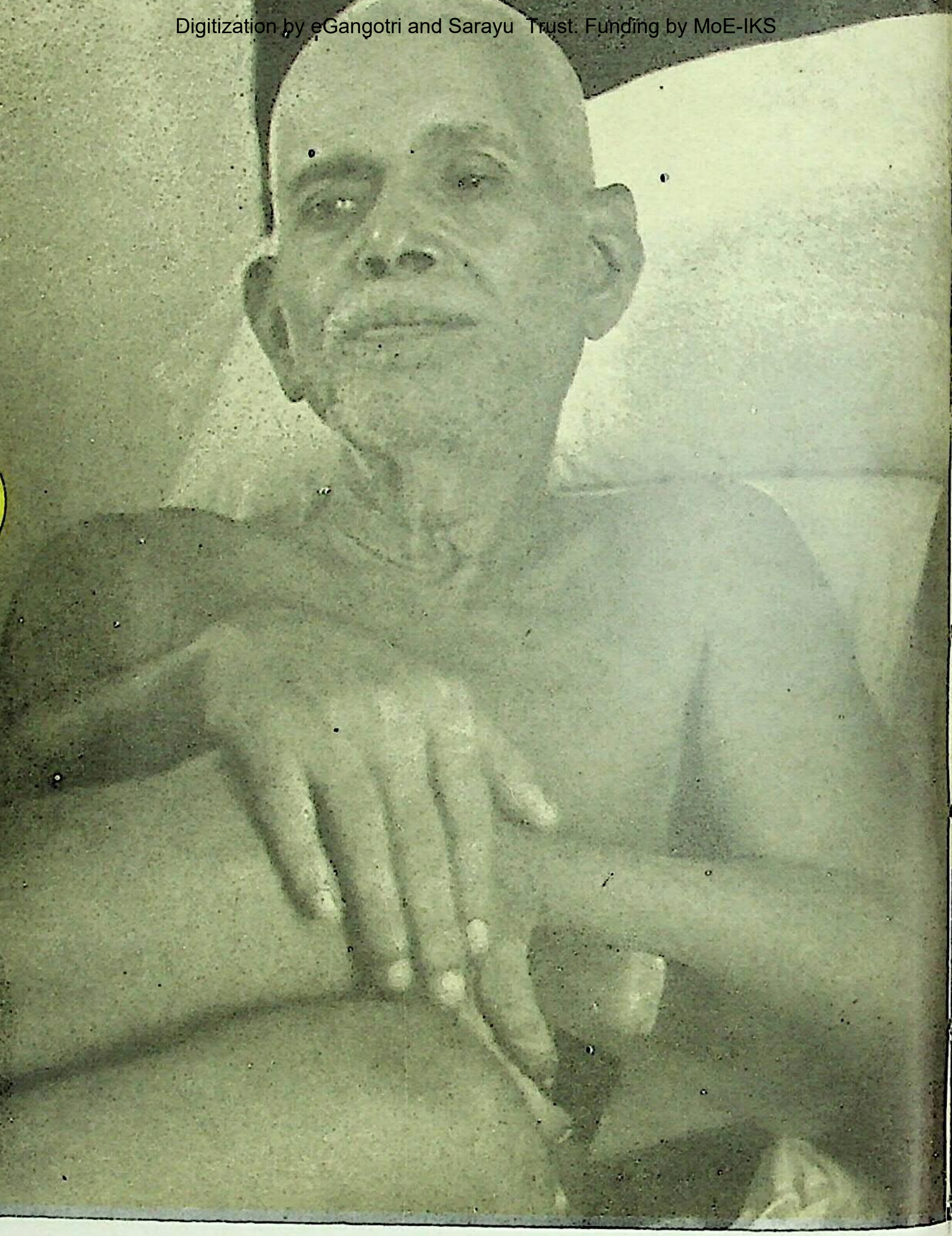

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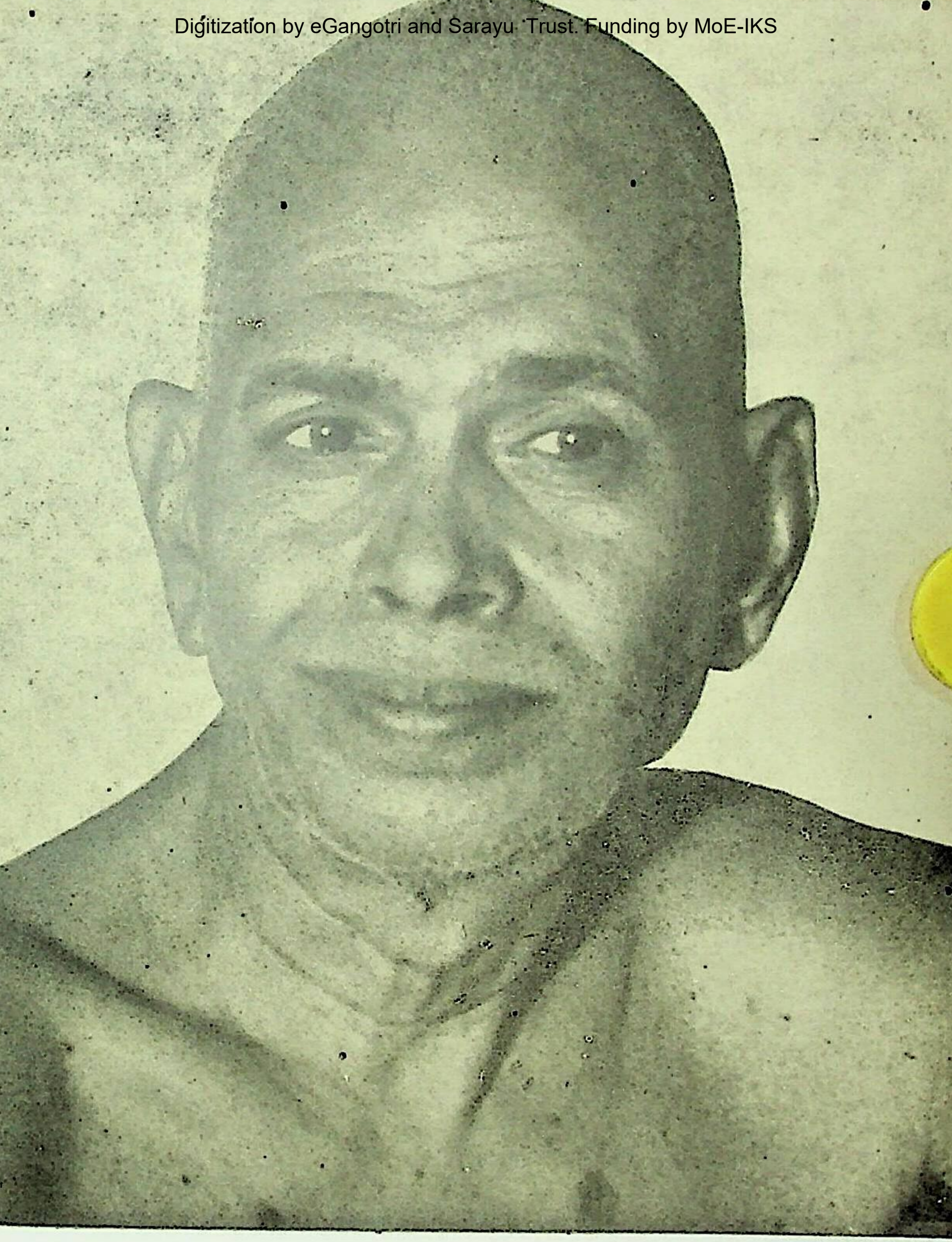

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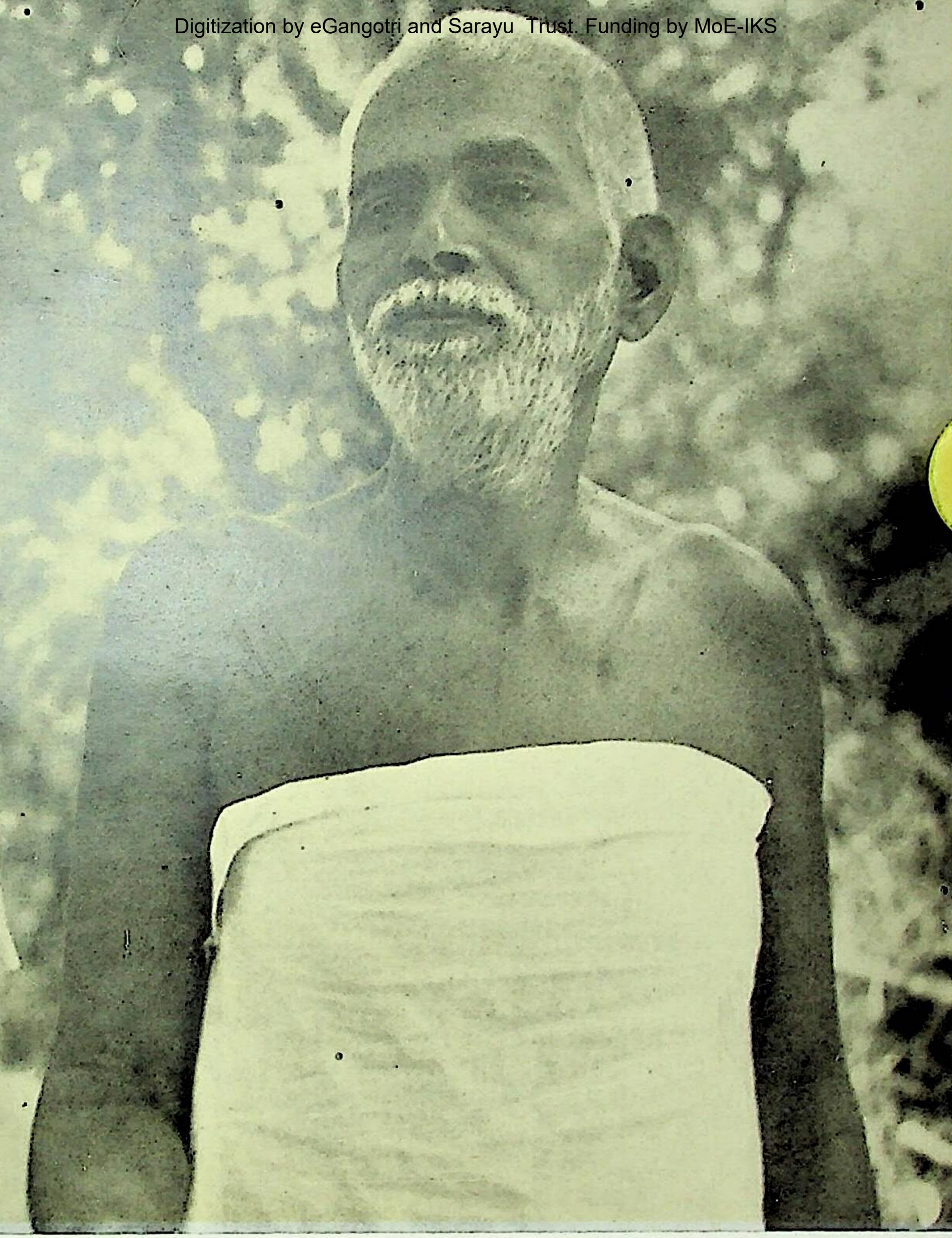

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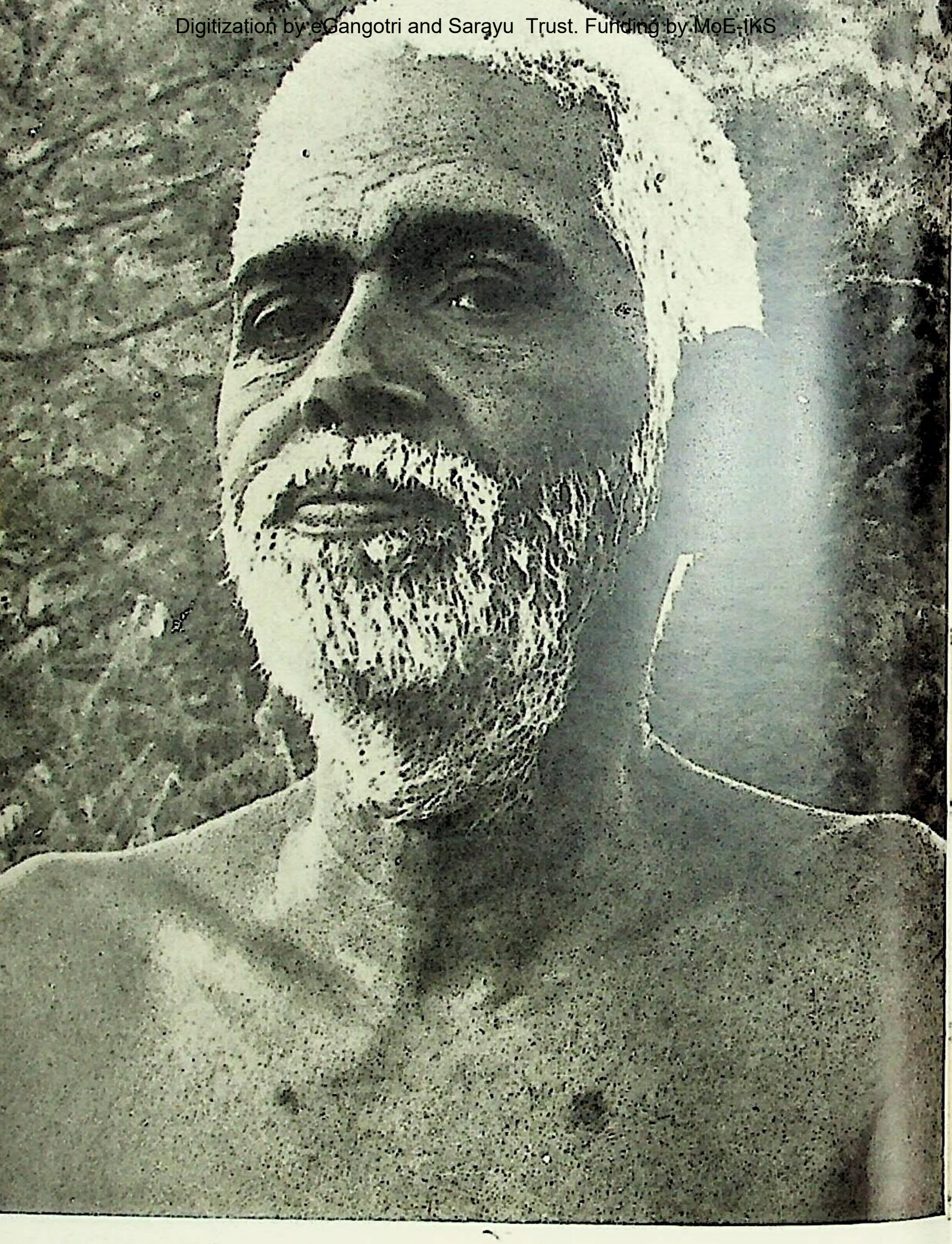

Melt us with Thy Loving Grace :

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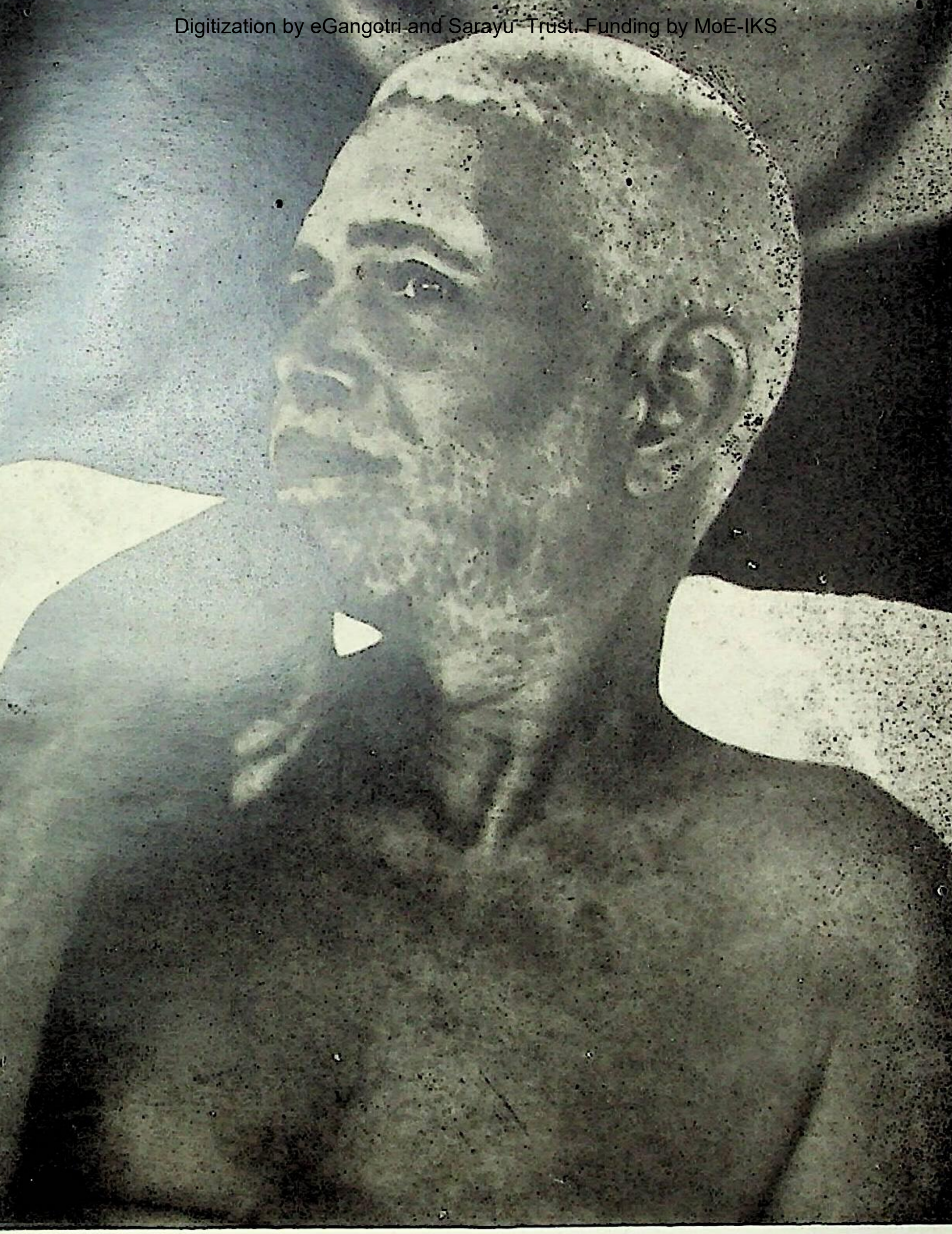

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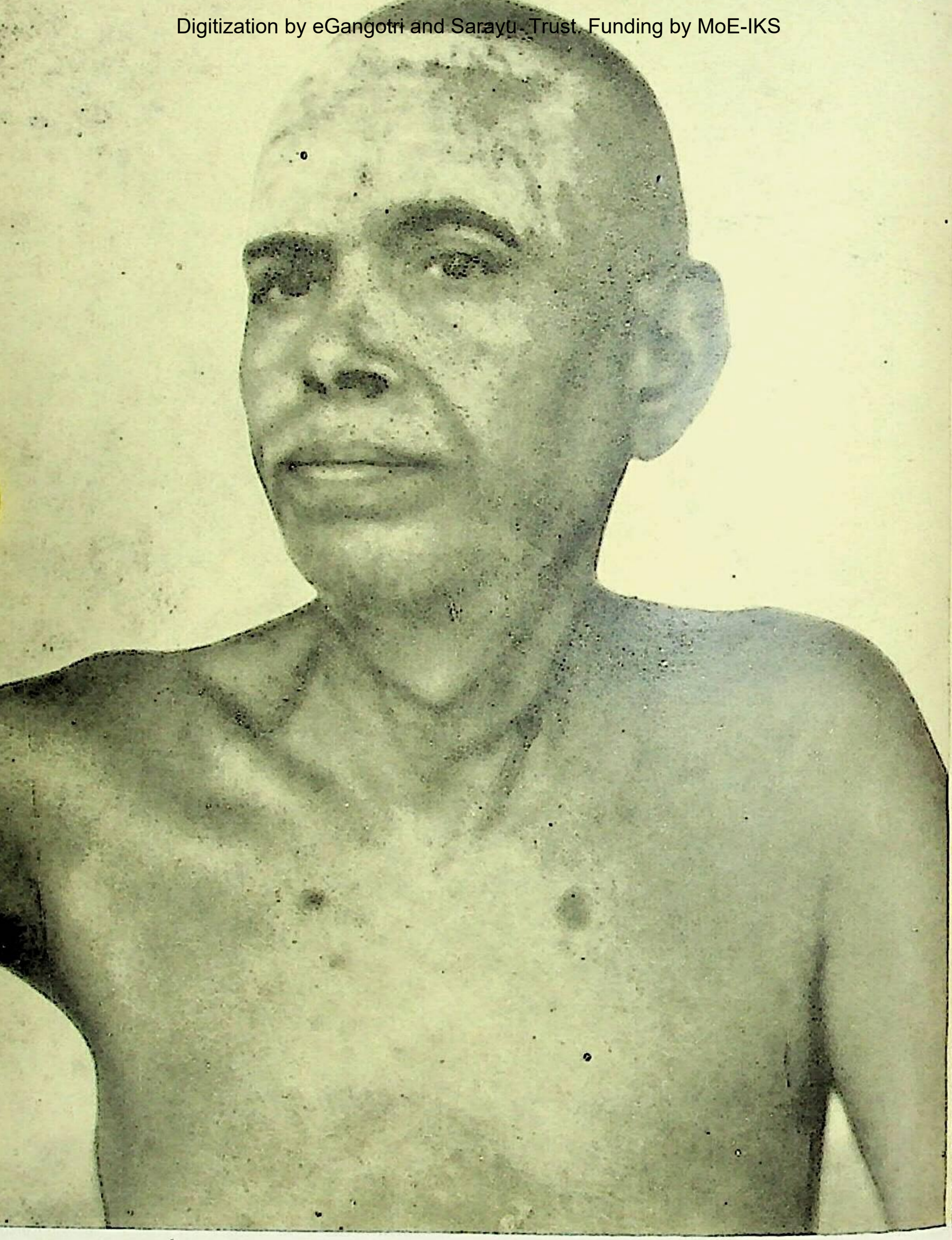

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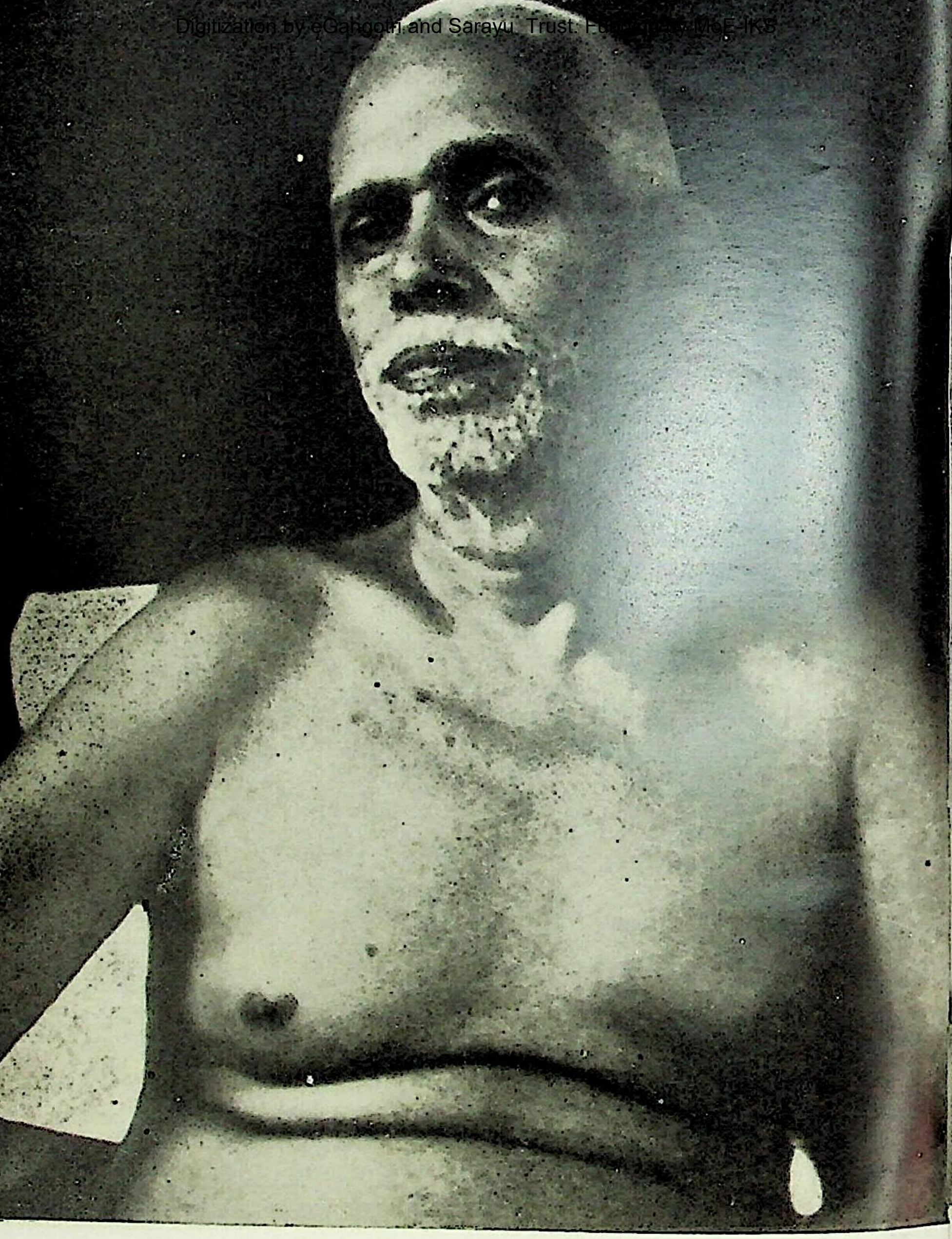

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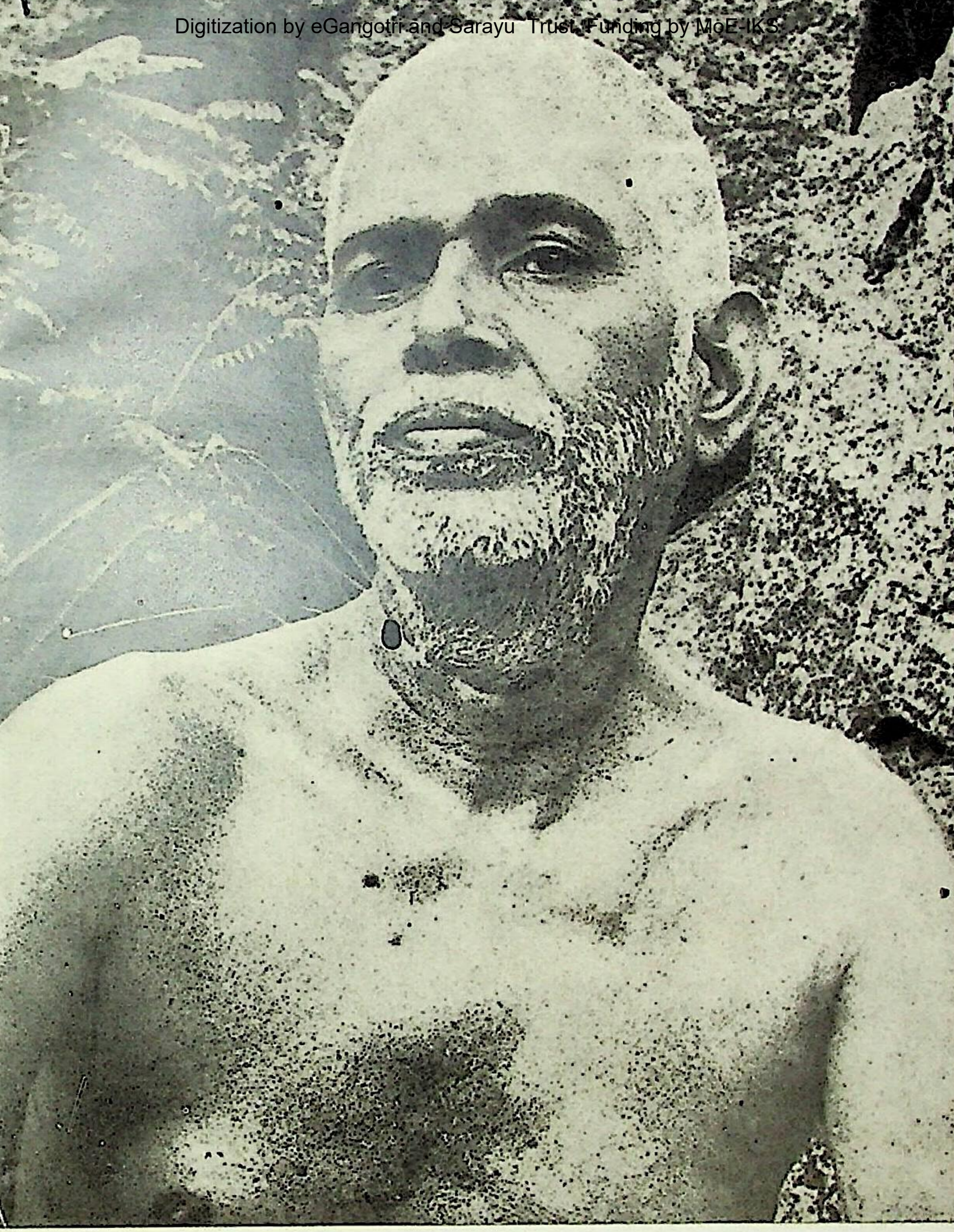

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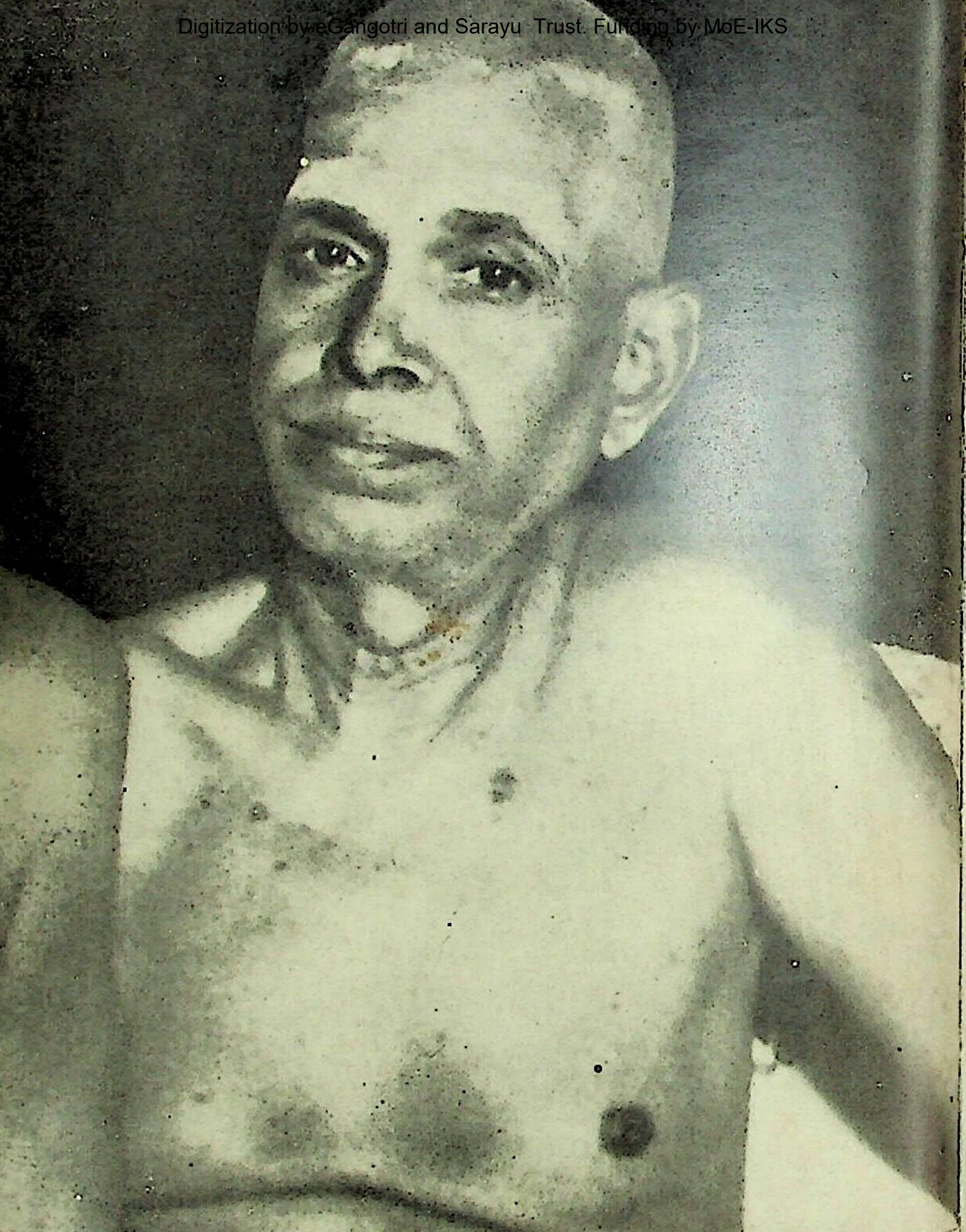

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SILENCE AND EFFORT

M. ANANTANARAYANAN
(Chief Justice, Madras High Court)

WE cannot conceive of *Sadhana* except as effort. But the time comes when it is clearly seen that effort, even of the most subtle and inward kind, is Will or Speech; and how can Noise produce Silence? After this it is difficult to make Effort; but it is equally difficult to escape from the climate of this realisation! Bhagavan once said that we could proceed inward only up to a point, " Then the beyond will take care of itself."

The interval between thoughts is vital, but the thought of the interval is itself a thought! If the electric fan slows down of itself, the separate blades are seen. I somehow feel that all this is so easy, direct and simple that I am astonished that people spend hours on abtruse problems of the intellect-created metaphysics. Surely paintings of food don't satisfy hunger!

After all, there is really nothing 'external' to oneself; but still I cannot forget the graciousness of Bhagavan to me (I should rather say Grace) so long as I have a memory and it functions as such.

RAMANA: THE SAVIOUR

YOGI SUDDHANANDA BHARATI

O foolish mind, like a dog roaming the street,
What other refuge than His sacred feet?
Seek Him as Father, for your one retreat.
Seek him unceasingly and sing his praise
And life's long sickness end in your Lord's ways.
Why wander like a walking corpse, my mind?
Turn to the Light of Grace and refuge find.

OM NAMO BHAGAVATHE SRI RAMANAYA!

DR. W. RADHAKRISHNAYYA

WHEN the Upanishad says '*Brahmavid Brahmaiva bhavati*', it is not so much that the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman, as there is no becoming; It is Being, which ever exists, and so would mean, '*Brahma eva Brahmavid bhavati*', — Brahman alone will be the knower of Brahman; just as the tenth man alone knows himself as the 'missing man'. This was true in the case of Sri Kavyakanta Ganapathi Muni. He was an unusually eminent scholar of Sanskrit, a great *tapasvi* and a great seeker after God. He could easily master many other languages. It was his greatness that perceived the "God in human form," when he met the sage of Arunachala and declared Him as "Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi." But for the greatness of his perception and declaration, many earnest devotees would have missed the great Saint of the age.

The term 'Bhagavan' is used in the puranas in addressing Sri Krishna, Kapila Maharshi, Veda Vyasa; and in the Upanishads the teacher is addressed as 'Bhagavan'. The term is defined as — *Aisvaryasya samagrasya dharmasya yashasashriyaha jnana vairagyayoschaiva shannaam bhaga iteeritaa* — Where *aisvarya, dharma, yashaha, shree, jnana* and *vairagya,* are in exuberance, that is known as 'Bhagavan'. *Aisvarya-eswaratva* or control, of the Sage of Arunagiri, over beings and things outside was unique and his control over the *indriyas* and the mind (if he had any) was supreme; His adherence to duty was ideal, worthy of being copied by all; His glory or renown is worldwide; wealth of its own accord flowed in abundance towards him; *jnana* or knowledge was his essential nature; *vairagya* or his renunciation towards the world and its pleasures was unbending. He was a teacher without claiming to be so; a teacher by silence like Sri Dakshinamurthy. So the term Bhagavan was most appropriate to him. He was a positive answer to the query

"Can I see God with my eyes?" "Yes" was the answer that was boldly emanating from the glow of his face. Though the body has disappeared, yet it is possible to 'See Him', not with the eyes but through that 'because of which the eyes see'.

May the grace of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi bless us, one and all, for all time to come.

TESTIMONY

G. V. SUBBARAMAYYA

THAT the mere thought or remembrance of you suffices to still the mind and harmonise the heart, I hereby testify.

That your invisible presence, spreading a spell of Silence, resolves all doubts, dissolves all distractions, charms away all unhappiness and radiates peace and bliss, I hereby testify.

That your angelic countenance and radiant look breathes compassion on all, I hereby testify.

That you who were incarnate in a mortal mould are in truth the embodiment of Truth itself, the supreme God walking on this earth, moving and suffering with us all to sanctify and save all souls, I hereby testify.

That you are the quintessence of all greatness and goodness, of all knowledge and wisdom, of all merit and worthiness, I hereby testify.

That you are all Gods, all Prophets, all Sages, indeed, all beings and all worlds, rolled into ONE, I hereby testify.

O Self of self!

●

"The word *Aham* is itself very suggestive. The two letters of the word, namely 'a' and 'ha', are the first and the last letters of the Sanskrit alphabet. The suggestion intended to be conveyed by the word is that it comprises all. How? Because *Aham* signifies existence itself." — SRI MAHARSHI.

WHO AM I?

R. NARAYANA IYER

"WHO AM I?" written by Maharshi is a short compendium of Advaita philosophy and the rationale behind the kaleidoscopic panorama of the universe that we see and experience in so many ways through our sense faculties. The various answers given to the doubts and queries of an earnest devotee have been collected and codified into a cogent whole making it appear as a brief treatise on philosophy based on the scriptures. The answers given were borne out of authentic personal experience. Even as Prince Siddharta in the prime of his youth, with all the paraphernalia of pleasure and pomp for a life of luxury and ease, felt perturbed and sorrow-stricken at the sight of miseries in the world, fled to the forest, renouncing everything, and found by himself the way to happiness through continuous meditation and introspection (self-enquiry), Bhagavan Sri Ramana left his home, his kith and kin, and plunged into a life of solitude at Holy Arunachala after having solved the mystery of life in his 17th year. His is an inner experience, of thorough and complete identification with the Eternal from the depths of which we found him speaking to us, appearing like us as an ordinary human being with tastes and qualities like us. While speaking or writing about the Maharshi, we have to bear in mind this fundamental difference that, though he behaved like one among us, he had his roots in the depths of deep Realisation. How can we comprehend that State? No! Our mind is always prone to clutch at things, comprehend them and label them as in a druggist's store 'Liquor Aromaticus', 'Terra-Cholera Ethelene', and so forth. But our scriptures say: 'God, Godhood, Self-Realisation, Jnana and Jnani, are beyond mental comprehension — *Vaachaam agocharam.*' Yet, we want to know them! Sri Bhagavan has said in the *Forty Verses*:

> "To those who have not realised the Self, as well as to those who have, the word 'I' refers to the body, but with

> this difference, that for those who have not realised, the 'I' is confined to the body whereas for those who have realised the Self within the body the 'I' shines as the limitless Self." — verse 17.

We find in the eternal scheme of things an unfathomable and mysterious link between the Real and the unreal. Like the hunter taking a tame deer to decoy and catch wild ones, once perhaps in hundreds of years, a personage, seeming like us in every way, appears in this unreal world and shows us the way to Reality.

Such a one was the Maharshi. So end we all our woes and worries, our squabbles and differences, our trifling problems of the moment and follow the path shown to us by the Maharshi and enter the Kingdom of Heaven, remembering for a moment the glaring fact affirmed by the obvious truth that "in a microscopic corner of one infinitesimal speck of dust floating in the black abyss of infinity inconsiderable atoms of human life hurry and fume and fret and are broken and triumphant in the trivial affairs of their instant in eternity. Lives begin and lives end but the primordial accident of life goes on".

Accident? Is there one? To whom?

●

Offering a coconut and breaking it before a God is a time-honoured custom widely observed. The late Lakshmi Ammal of Tiruchuli who was a playmate of Bhagavan in his boyhood days once stood before him and was struggling to tear the fibres from a coconut so that it could be broken. Sri Bhagavan asked her what she was doing. She said, "It is Vijayadasami today and I thought it good to break a coconut before Bhagavan." He took the nut from her hands, cleared it of the fibre and broke it before himself, while Lakshmi Ammal stood helplessly watching and amused. One must visualise the scene to appreciate the humour. There is food for thought also.

●

"Major operations are performed under anaesthetics, keeping the patient unaware of the pain. Does the patient gain jnana, too, at the same time? Insensibility to pain cannot be jnana."—BHAGAVAN.

THE FACE OF SILENCE

LUCY CORNELSSEN

EACH century has a particular face of its own, most of them not being pleasant when seen as a whole. And our 20th century? The ring of nuclear weapons already covers the northern half of this planet. Furthermore the world experts on food problems have come to the conclusion that our progress in production of foodstuffs cannot keep pace with the rapidly increasing population of the world, so that before the end of this century people will have to die of starvation by the million. The 20th century wears a face of horror and dread never seen before.

However, in contrast to this aspect of running and fighting, of shouting and babbling there has been also another aspect: the face of the true Man. It has always been the same, throughout the centuries, calm and quiet, looking mercifully on all the suffering, the vain striving for lasting happiness in transient matters. And it has always been a living reflection of the timeless Face of Silence.

The most outstanding embodiment of it in this century has been Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. This Pictorial Souvenir shows on many pages the mighty influence which radiates from a being who knows and *lives* the Truth of Man.

Will there ever be a time when mankind as a whole will be stamped by that timeless Face of Silence? Nobody knows; but everybody who feels that secret Power may choose it as his inner Guide that will mould his own life and being into another embodiment of Purity and Peace.

●

"Prostration (*namaskar*) signifies the subsidence of the ego, and it means merging into the Source."—SRI RAMANA.

EVEN A VISIT

S. L. SILAM

Lieut. Governor, Pondicherry

INSCRUTABLE are the ways of the Sages. All sages guide, however, to the same goal, namely, Realisation of the Supreme Self. The journeys to this goal differ. Sometimes they are slow and laborious, sometimes seemingly quick. When we are ushered into the presence of a Saint, our spirit receives an uplift and we forget all mundane pleasures and objectives. I have heard it said that the innumerable people who visited Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi during his life-time had this ennobling experience. He was a sage of matchless purity, devoid of all kinship to worldliness. A spiritual genius, he showed the path to the eternal truth of 'Vedanta'.

It is said that Venkataraman, as the Yogi was known when he was but a member of his family at Madurai, had Self Realisation come to him almost in a flash. He could perceive the truth directly without any arduous or time-consuming '*Sadhana*'. Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi lost his sense of ego and became divorced from his body at the early age of 17. Hence it is no wonder that he attained the peak of spiritual glory and flowered into a Saint even at that young age.

We are all aware that the Maharshi had not been formally initiated into sannyas. The philosophy of Sri Ramana Maharshi is the same as 'Advaita Vedanta', namely Oneness with the Self. The central theme of his teaching is inquiry into the nature of the Self, the content of the notion 'I' (*ahamkara*). The conquest of the notion 'I' is the consummation of Self Realisation. Once Ramana Maharshi attained this Self Realisation, he was rightly ranked among great Saints of the South like Shankara, Ramanuja, Tirugnanasambandar and others.

I was not privileged to have darshan of the Maharshi during his lifetime, but I am one of those who believe that even a visit to Ramanashramam in Tiruvannamalai can bring the same degree of solace to the mind, heart and soul as was experienced by those who met him in flesh and blood.

It is gratifying to note that the Kumbhabhishekam of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi's Shrine is due to come off on the 18th June 1967 and my prayer is : " May the Maharshi's spirit permeate this world and bring peace and comfort to mankind ! "

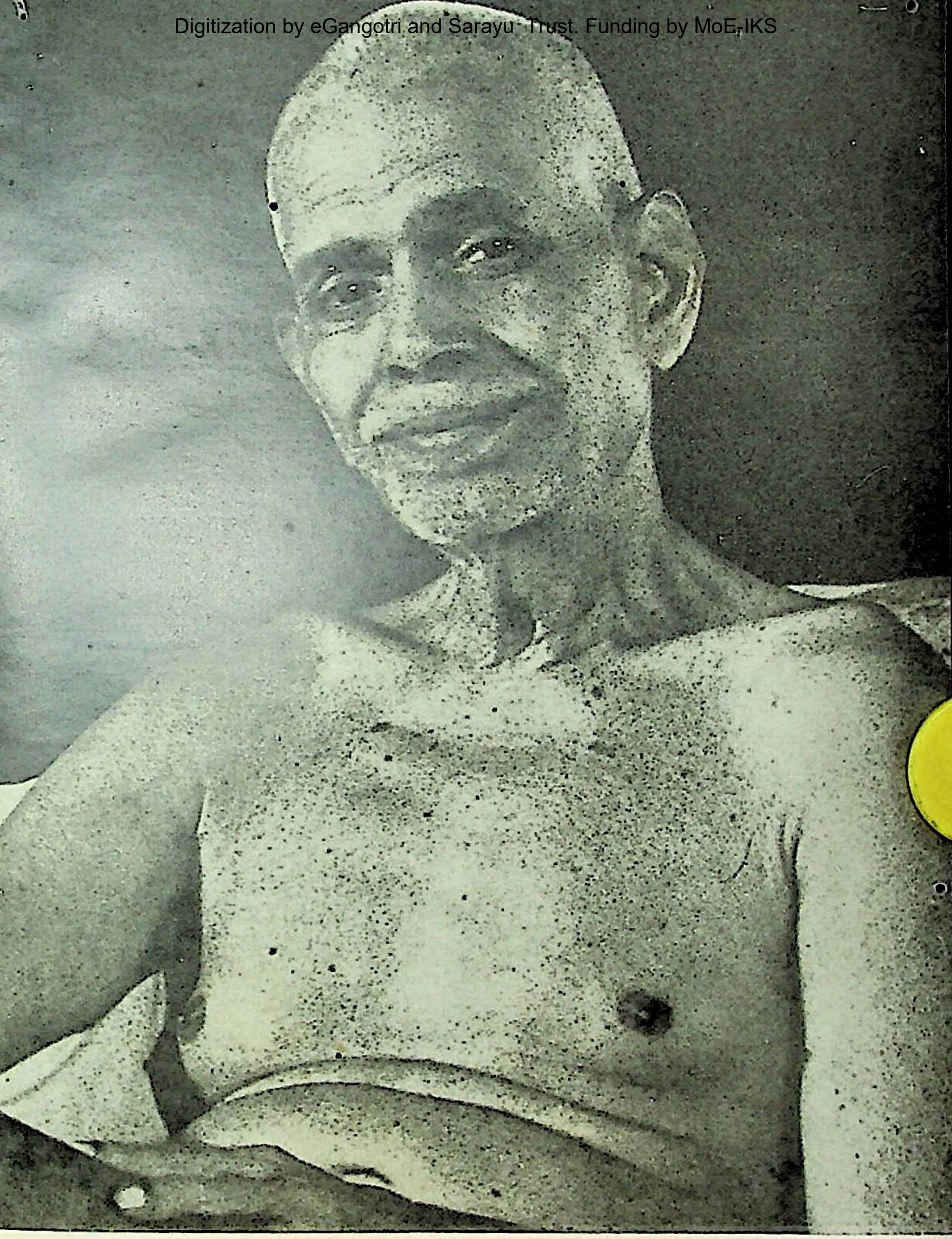
STILL HERE

G. N. DALEY

BHAGAVAN, my Beloved, Your earthly Presence was unknown to me when You cast away its sacred shrine with those ineluctable words of comfort and promise, " I am here. where else can I go ? " Long after the sadness which followed You came to me and in that timeless bliss I knew the meaning of Your words. . . . Time past, time present and future time are the indivisible point wherein abides the linked sequence of events.

The eternal wisdom with which Sri Maharshi met so many diverse needs by example, speech and silence flowed from the Grace of His indivisible oneness with the Self, unbounded by the spread of flimsy space. Still here, unseen by eyes, His Grace reaches deep within our hearts, links in wholeness our separated selves and draws the conjoint beings into the still centre of the Self. His one swift glance of Grace within the heart is the finality which utterly disposes of ambiguous time.

Sri Maharshi's teaching, now as always, and in whatever form it may take, flows freely from His changeless Grace, piercing through the dark mind with the consummating Light of the One Self. . . . O Arunachala, our beacon in the long night, not born and undying, give us the wisdom to seek Your Light within ourselves.



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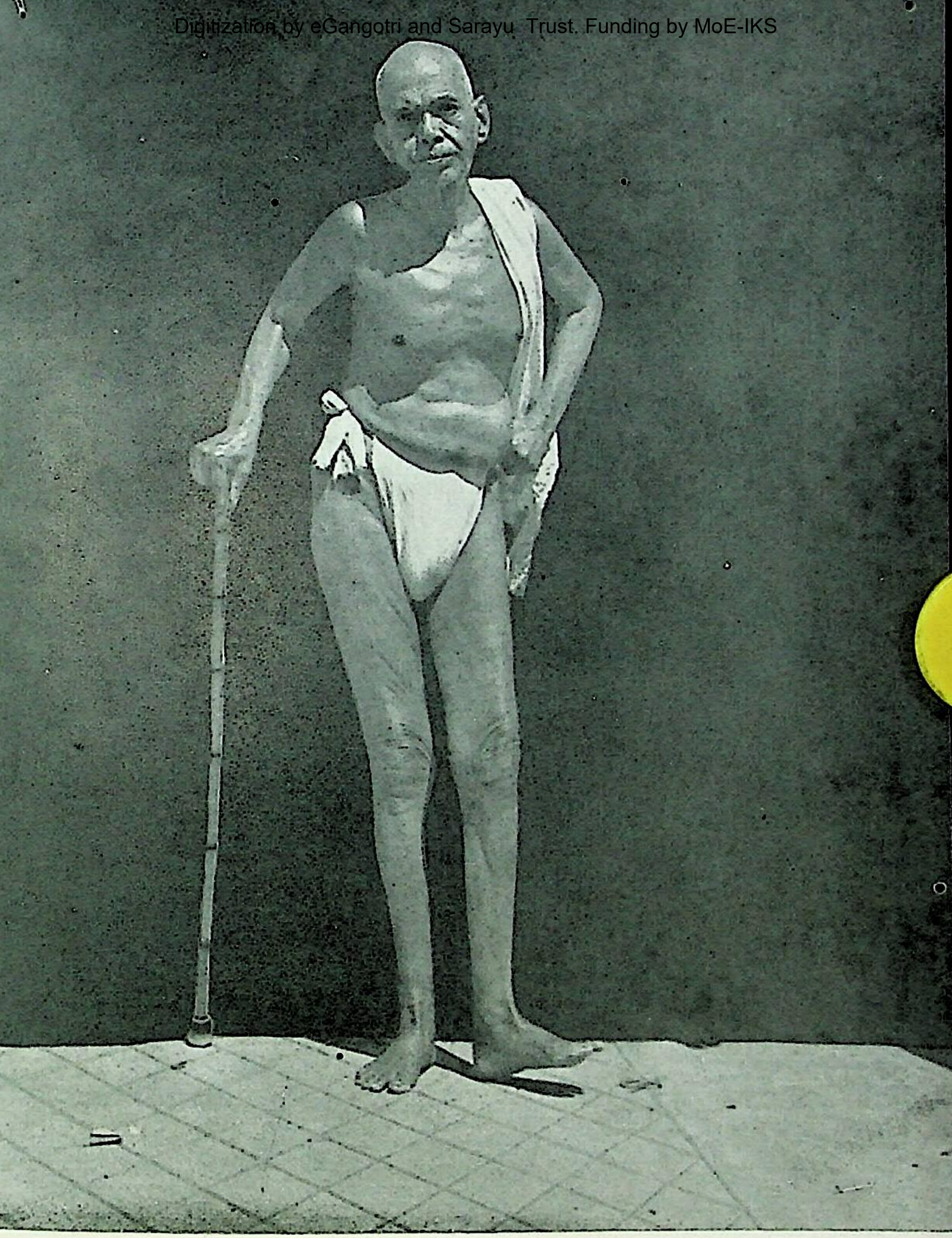

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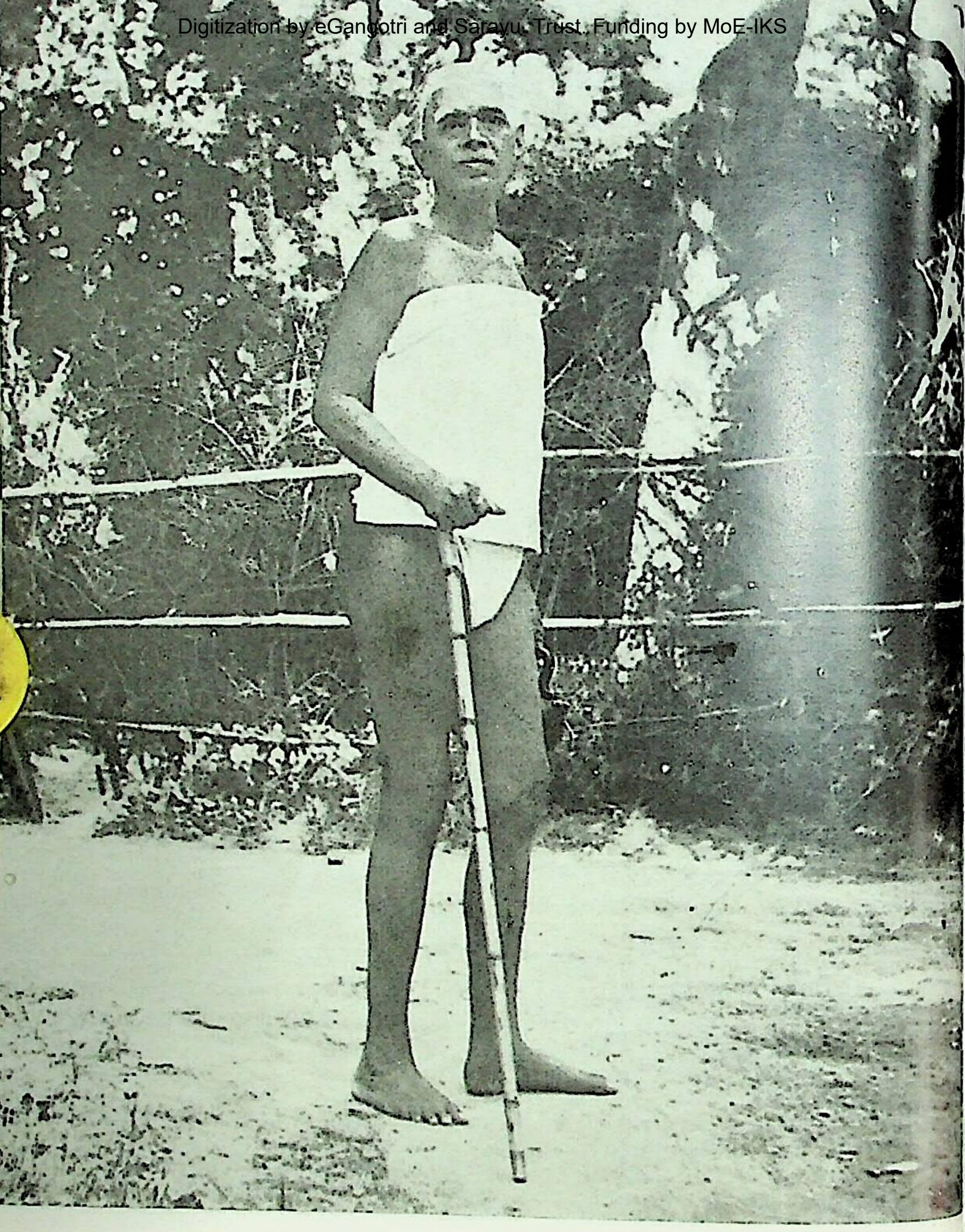

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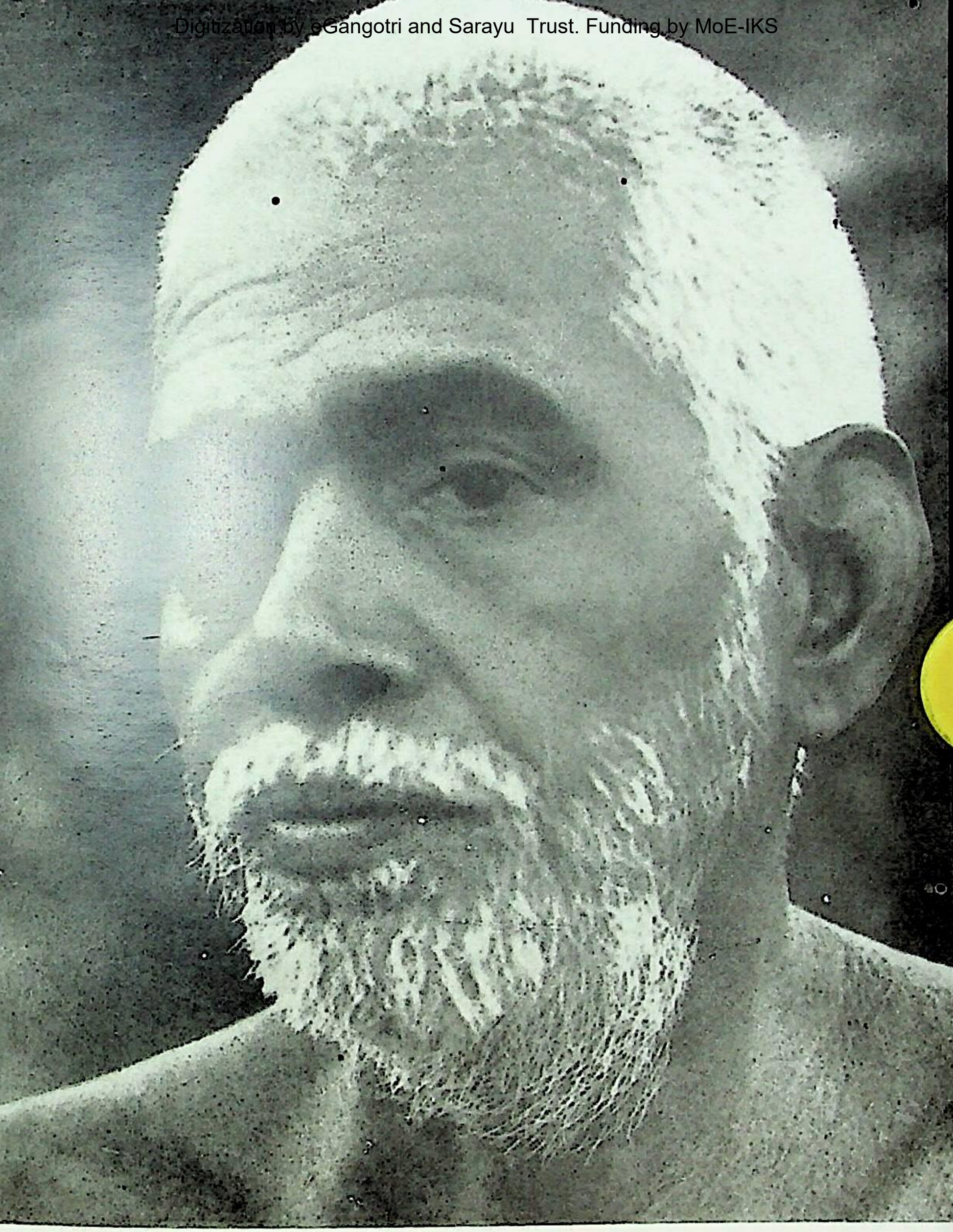

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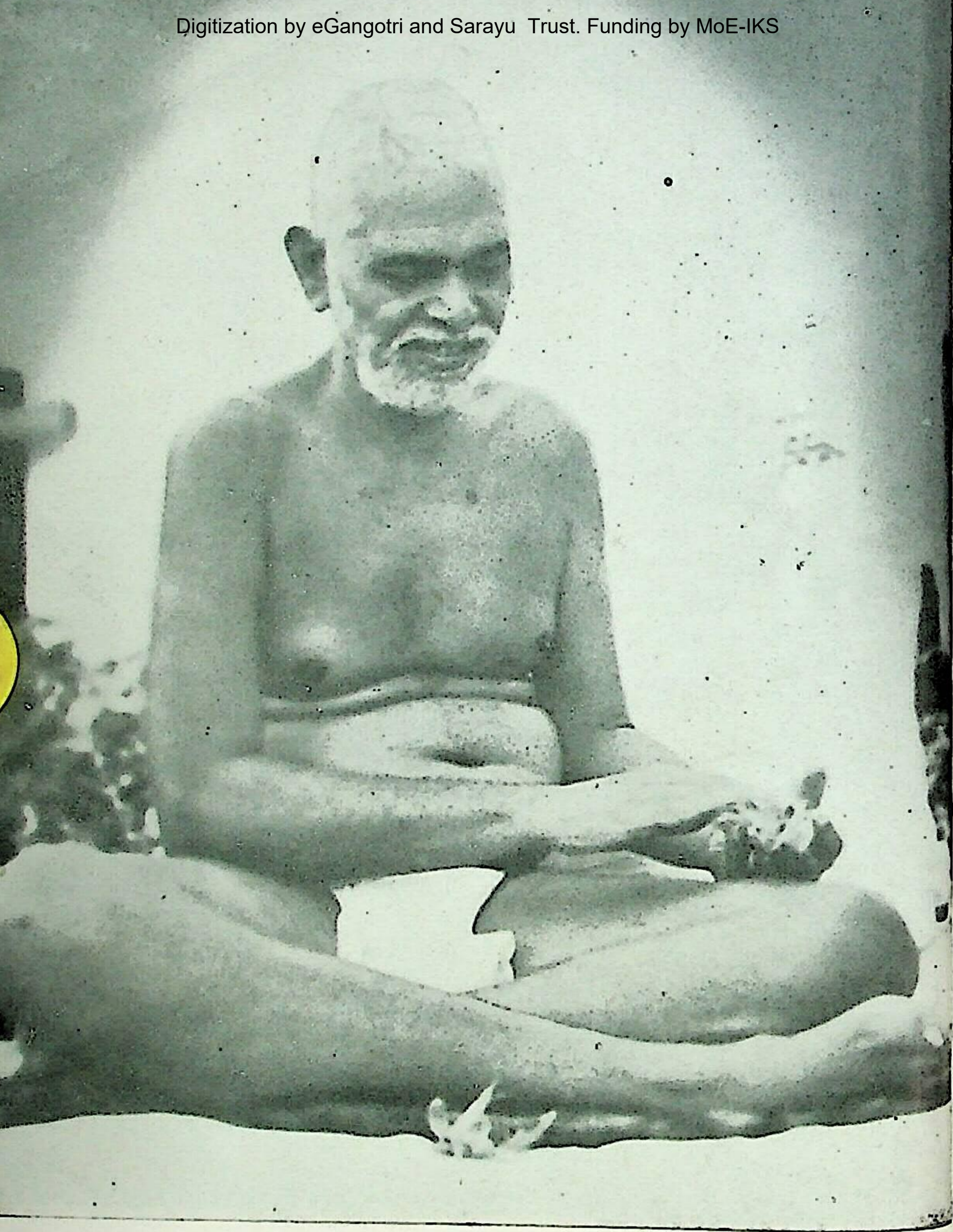

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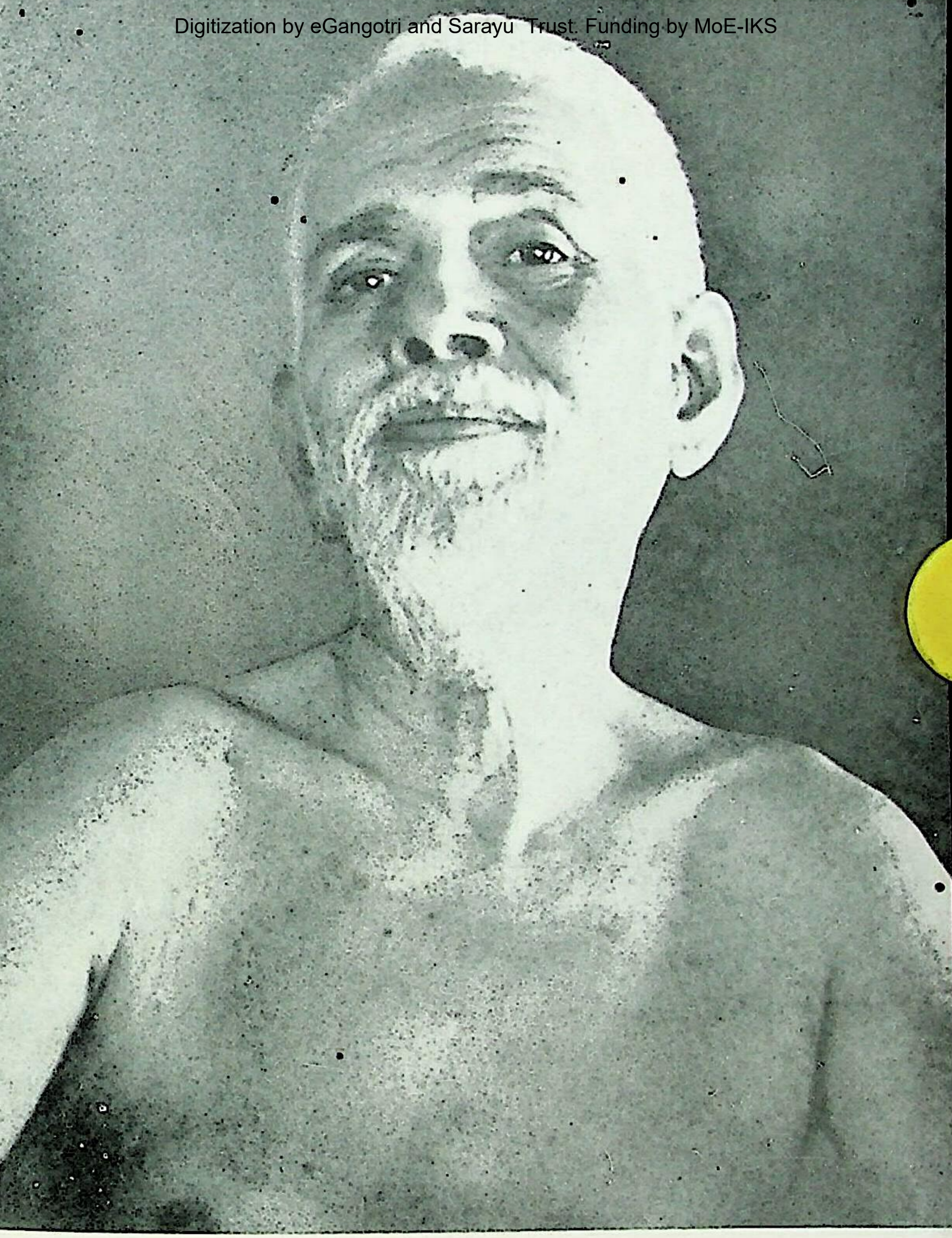

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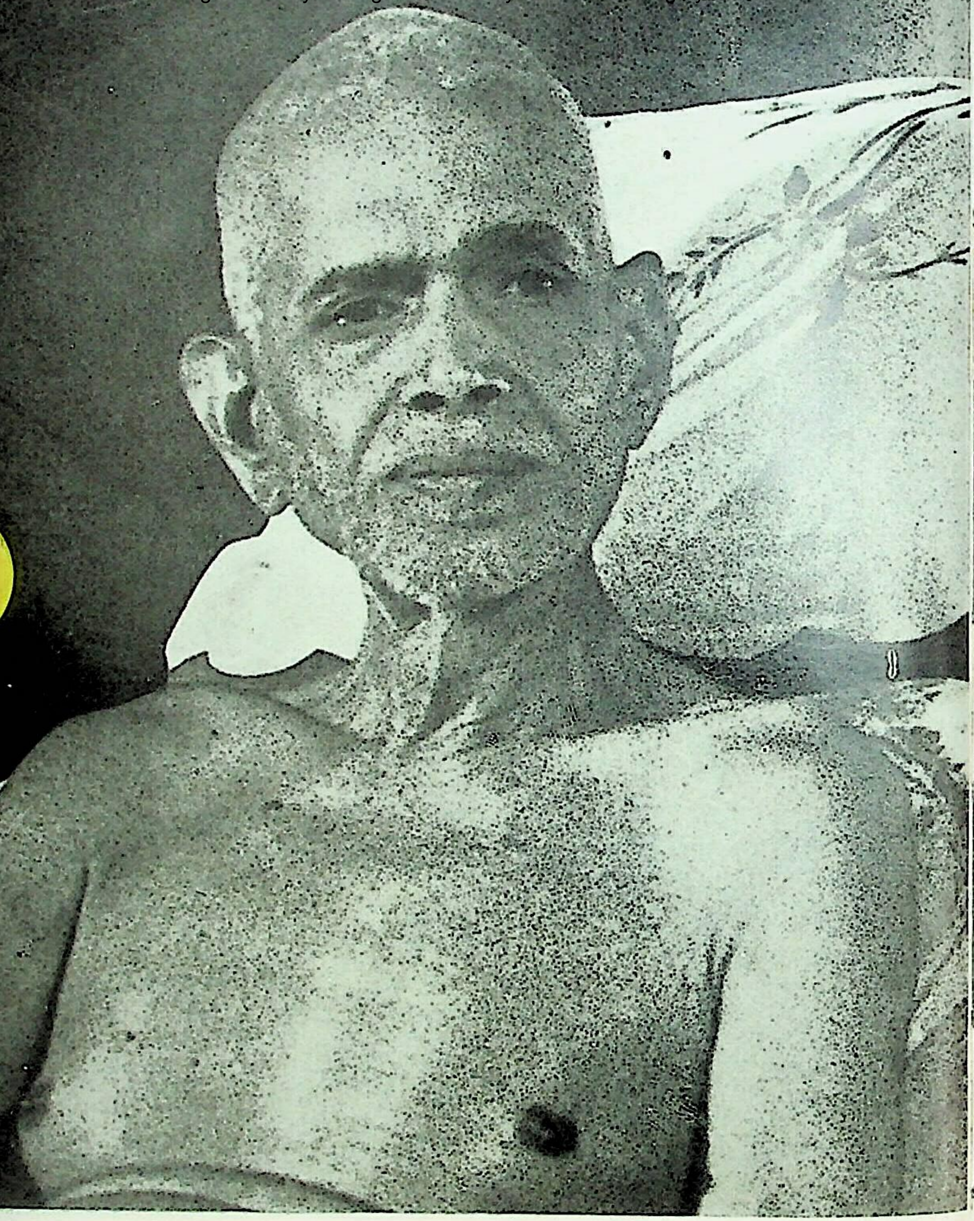

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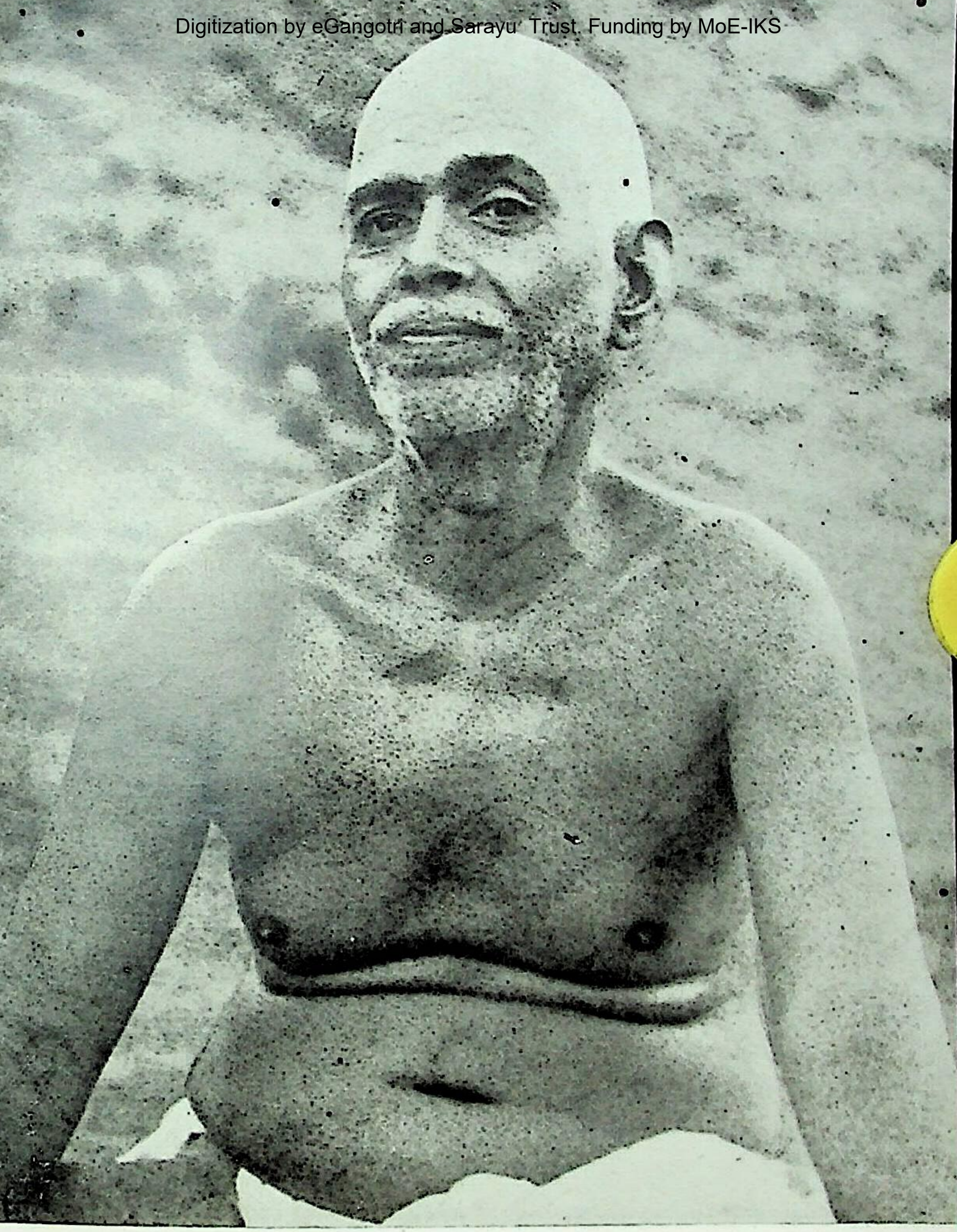

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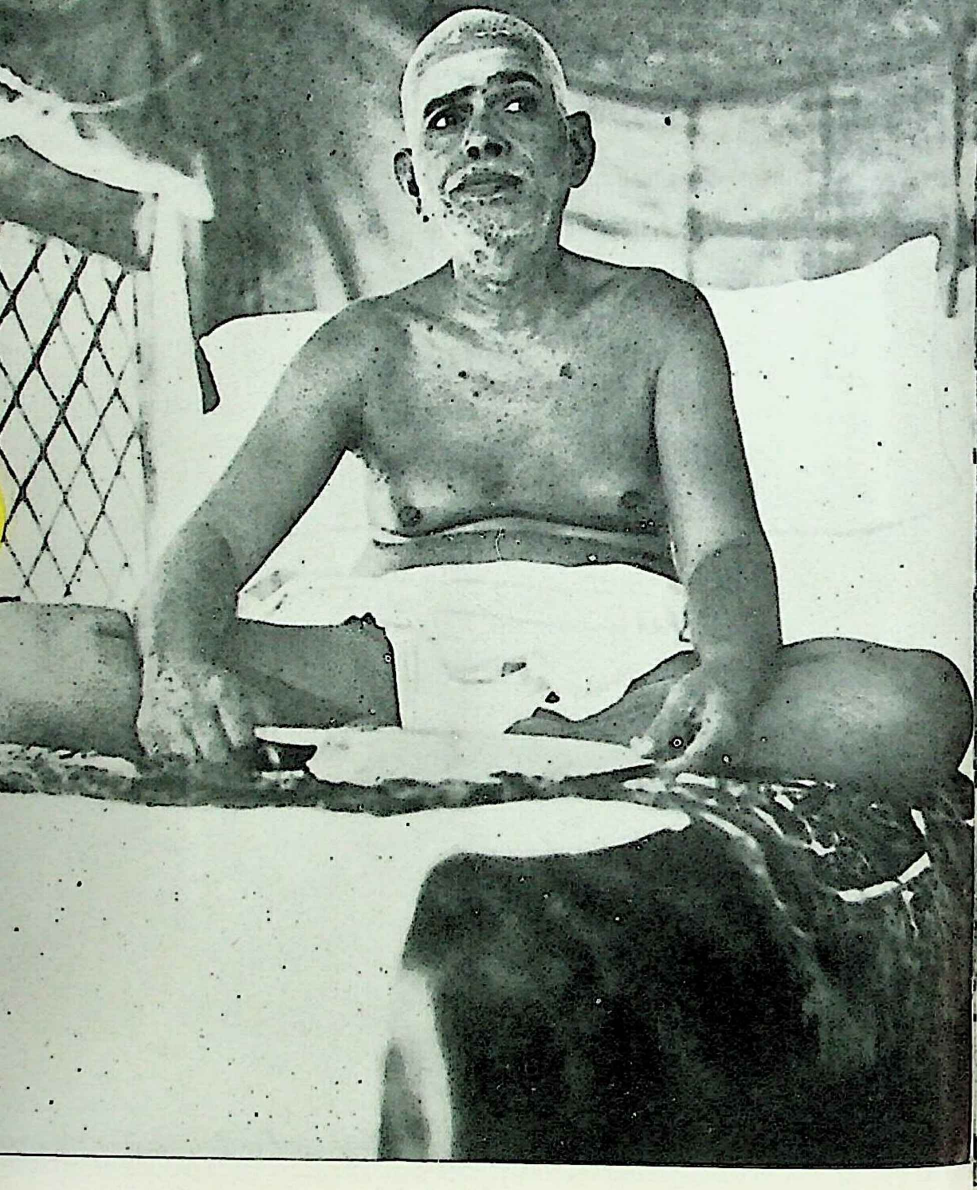

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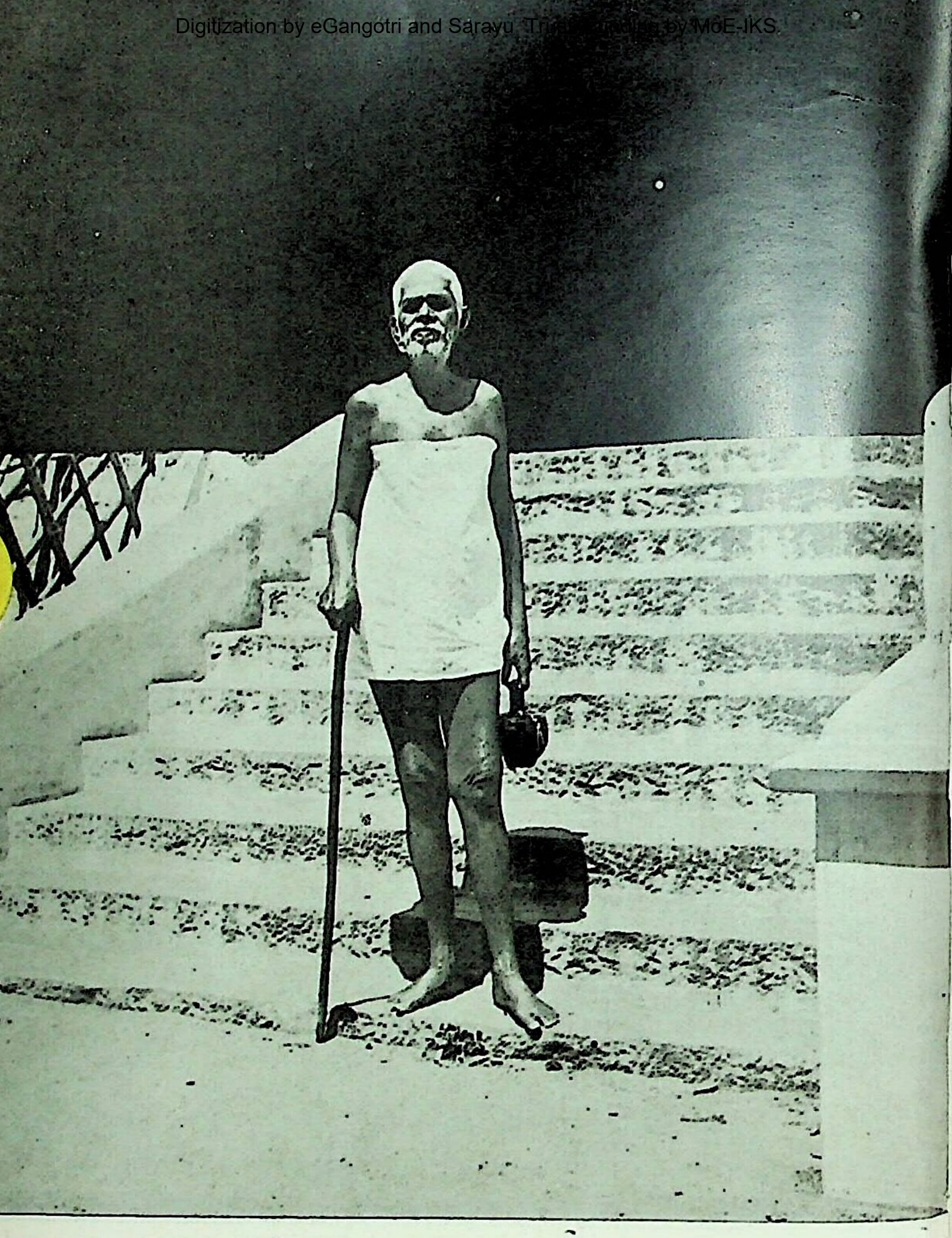

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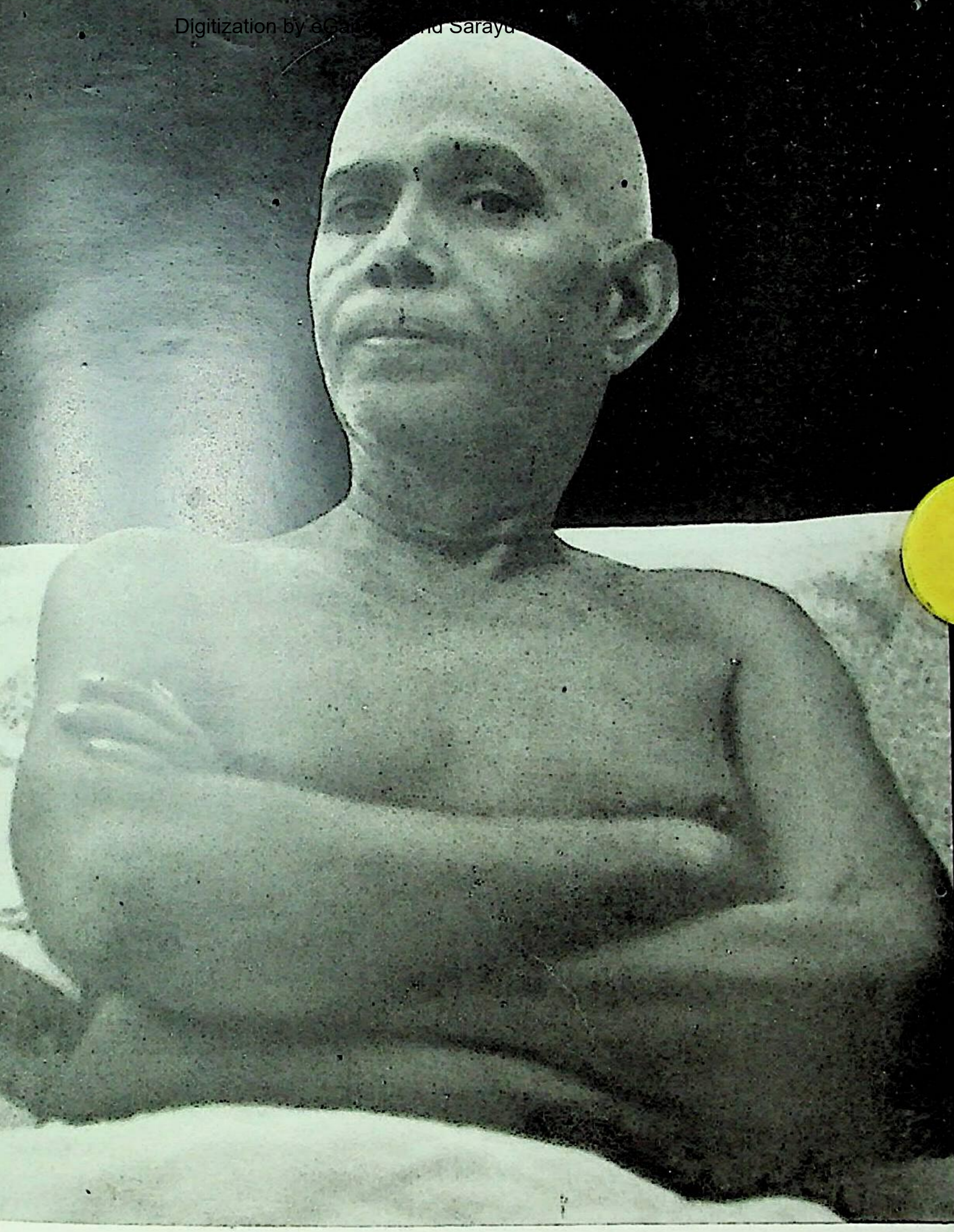

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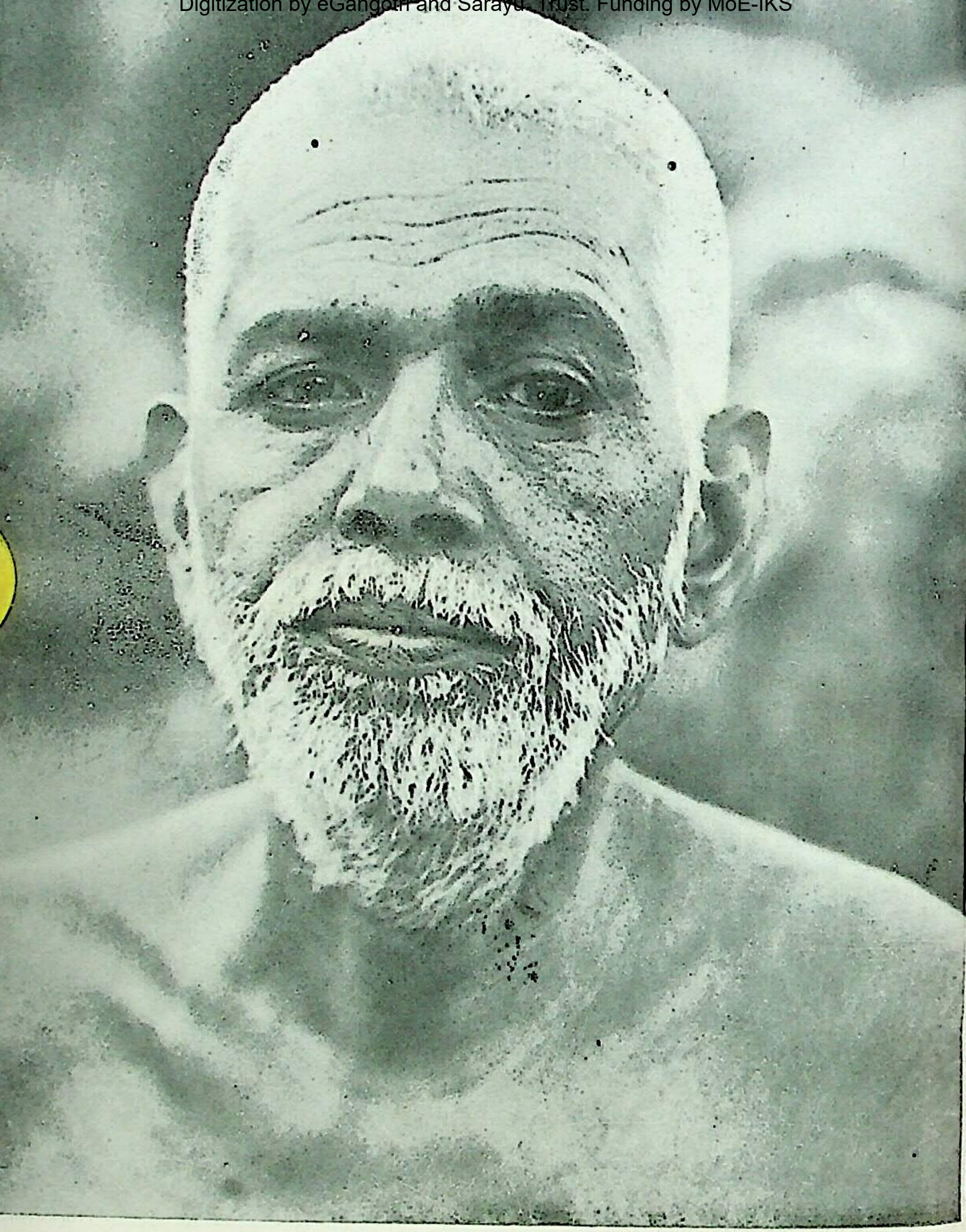

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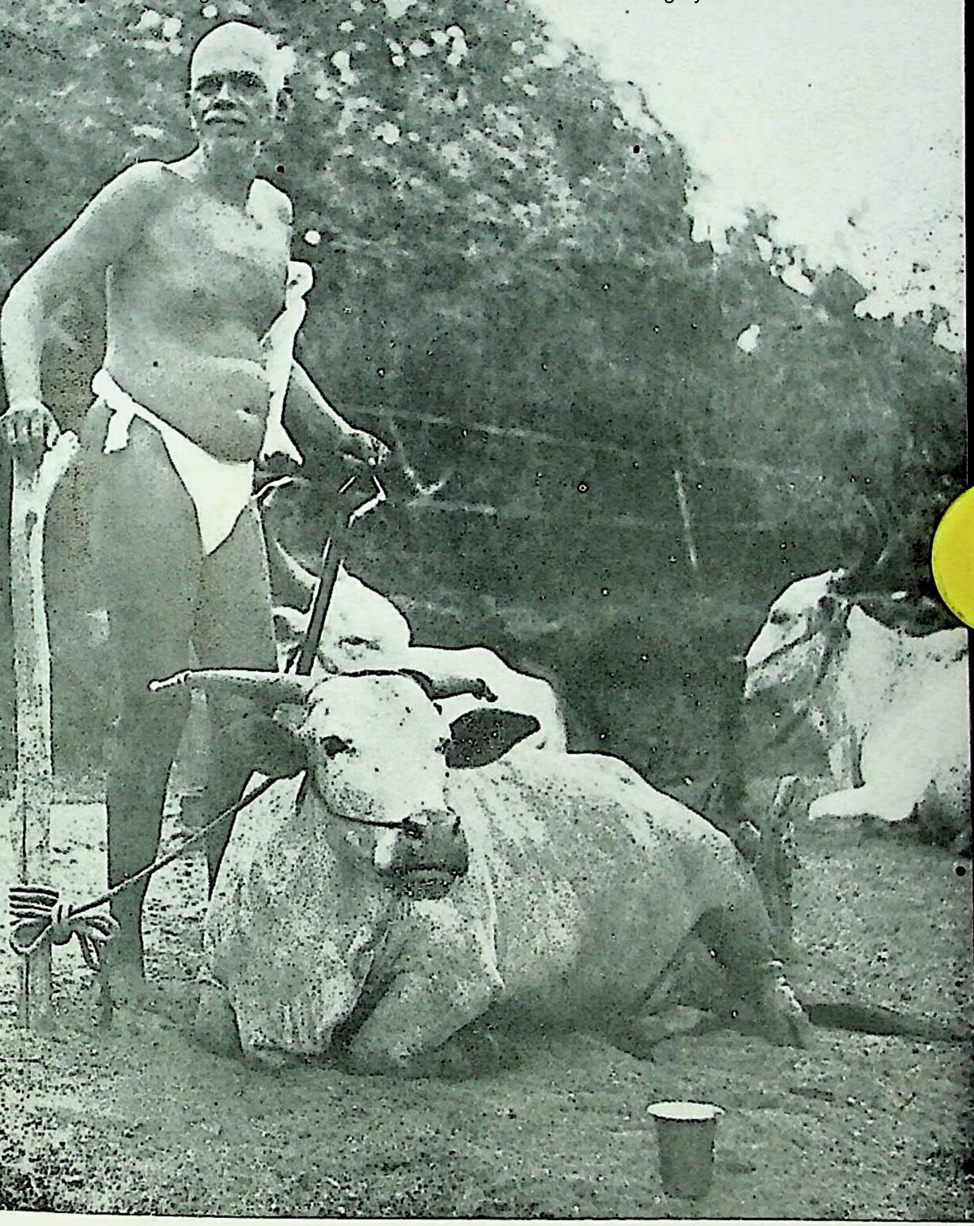

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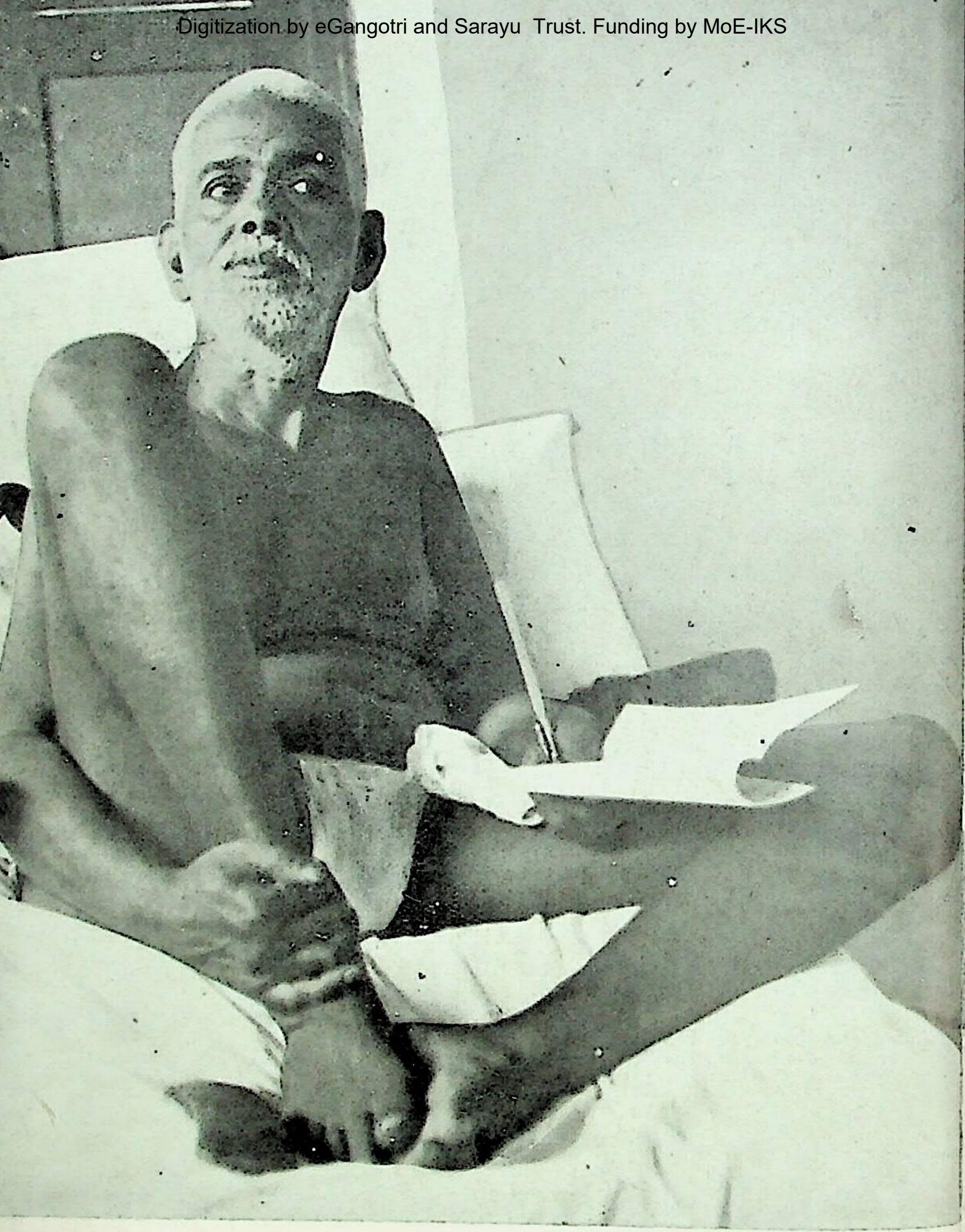

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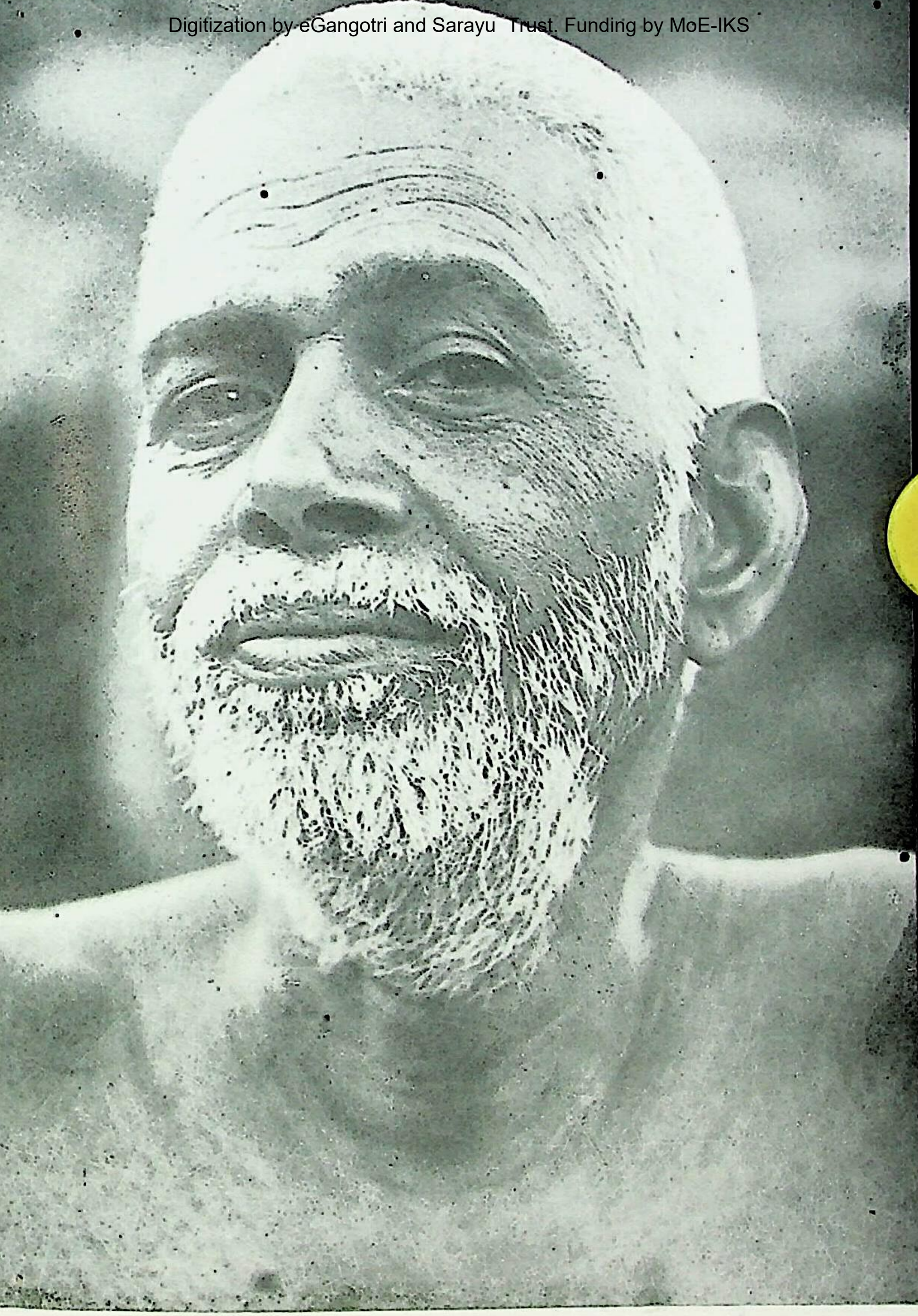

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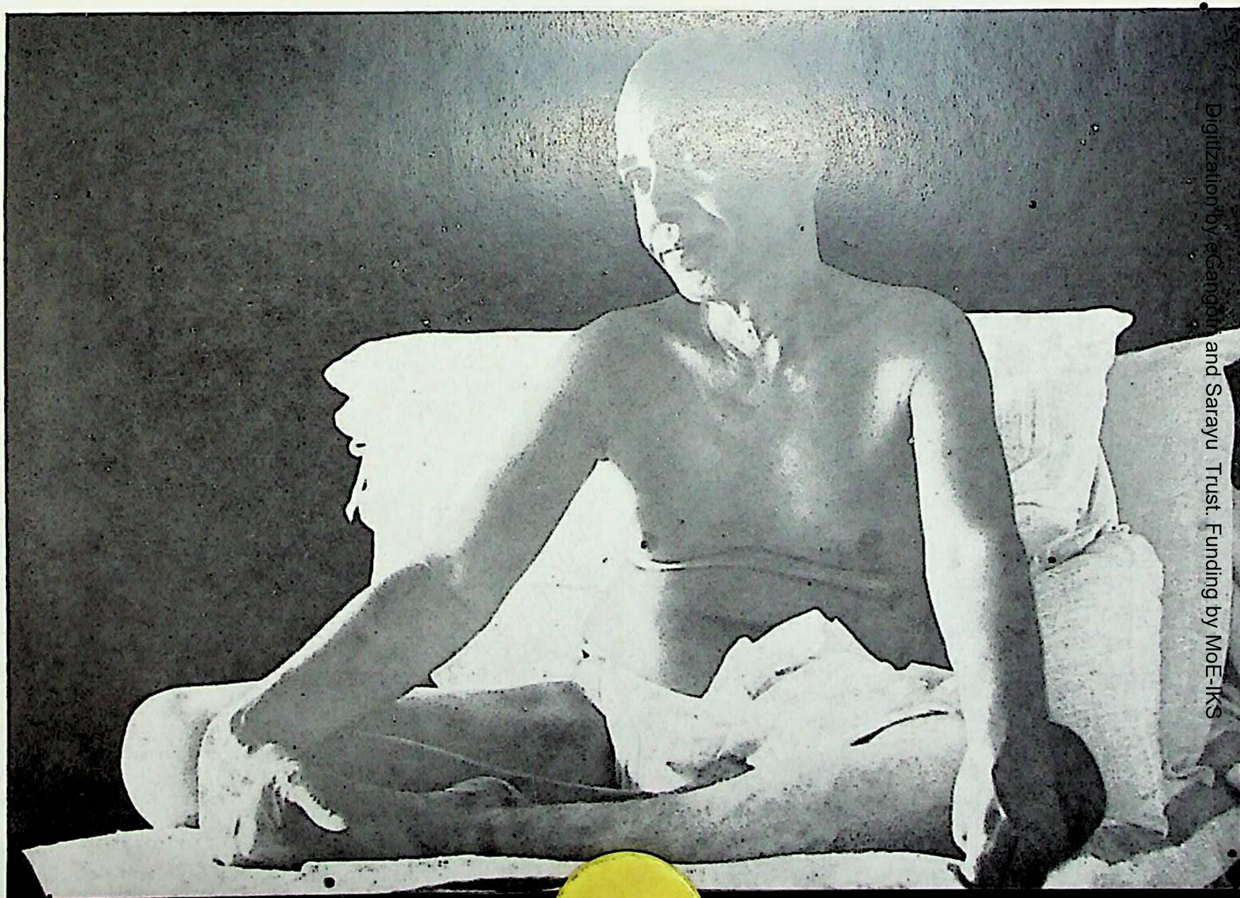

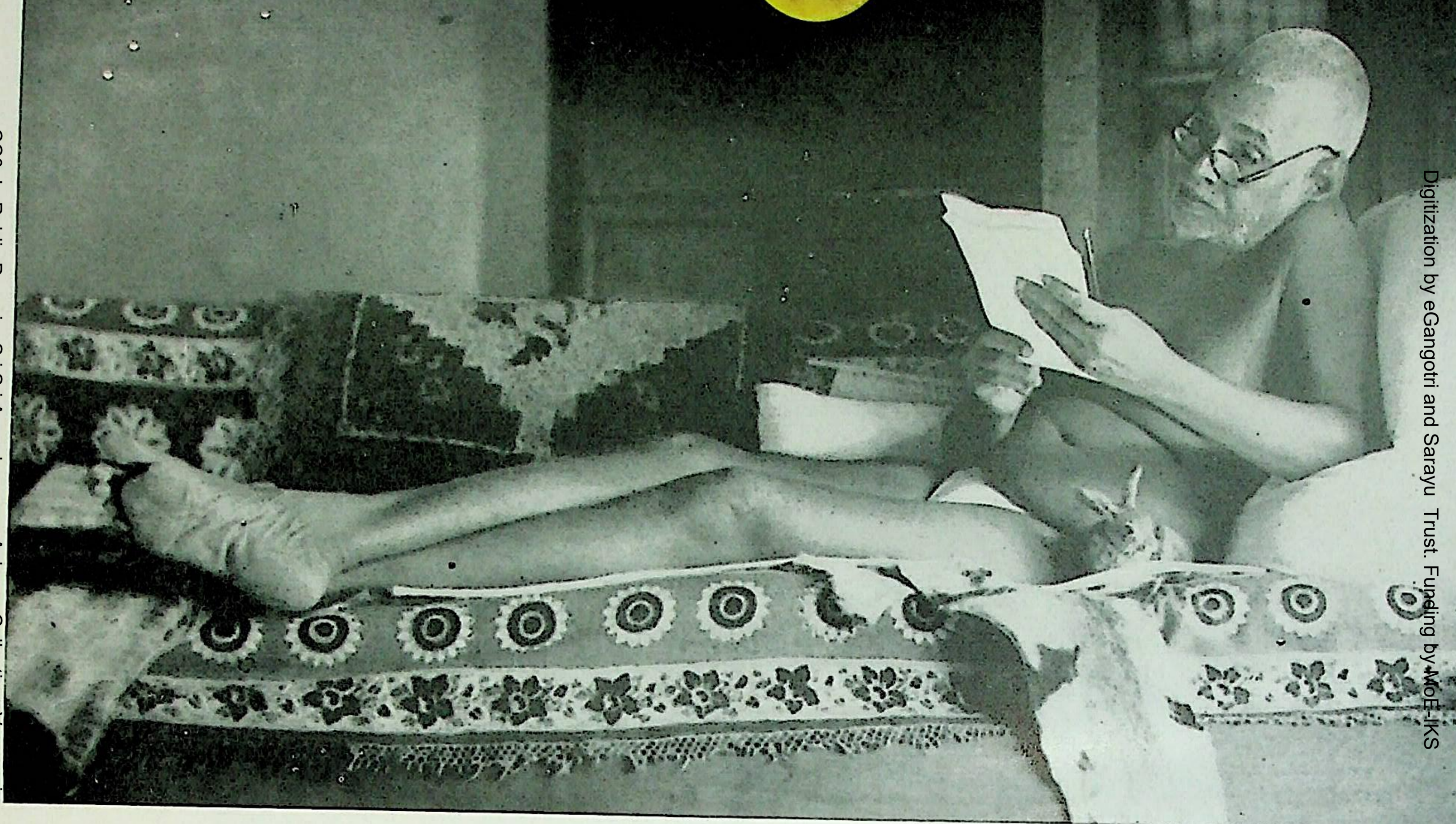

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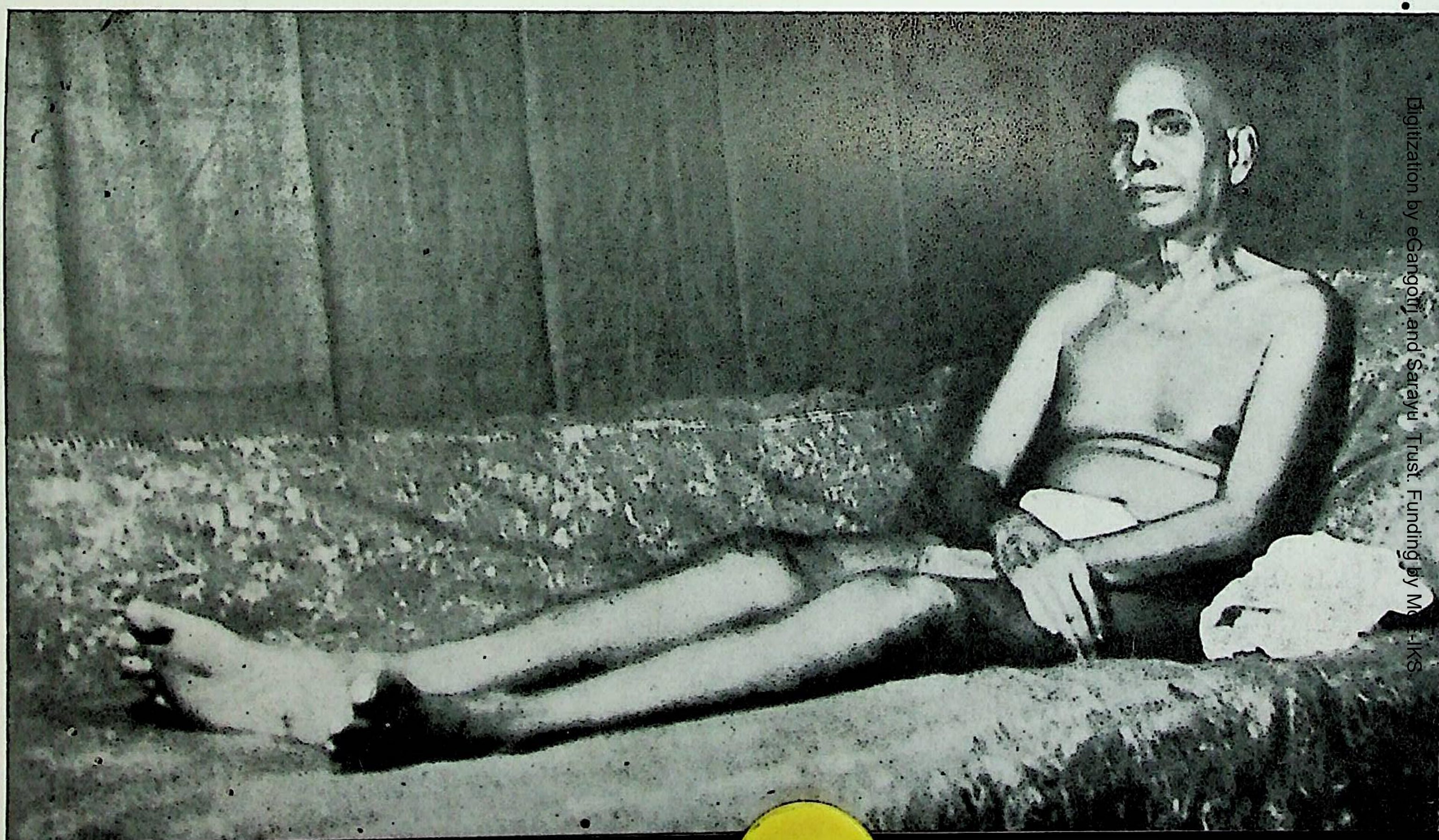

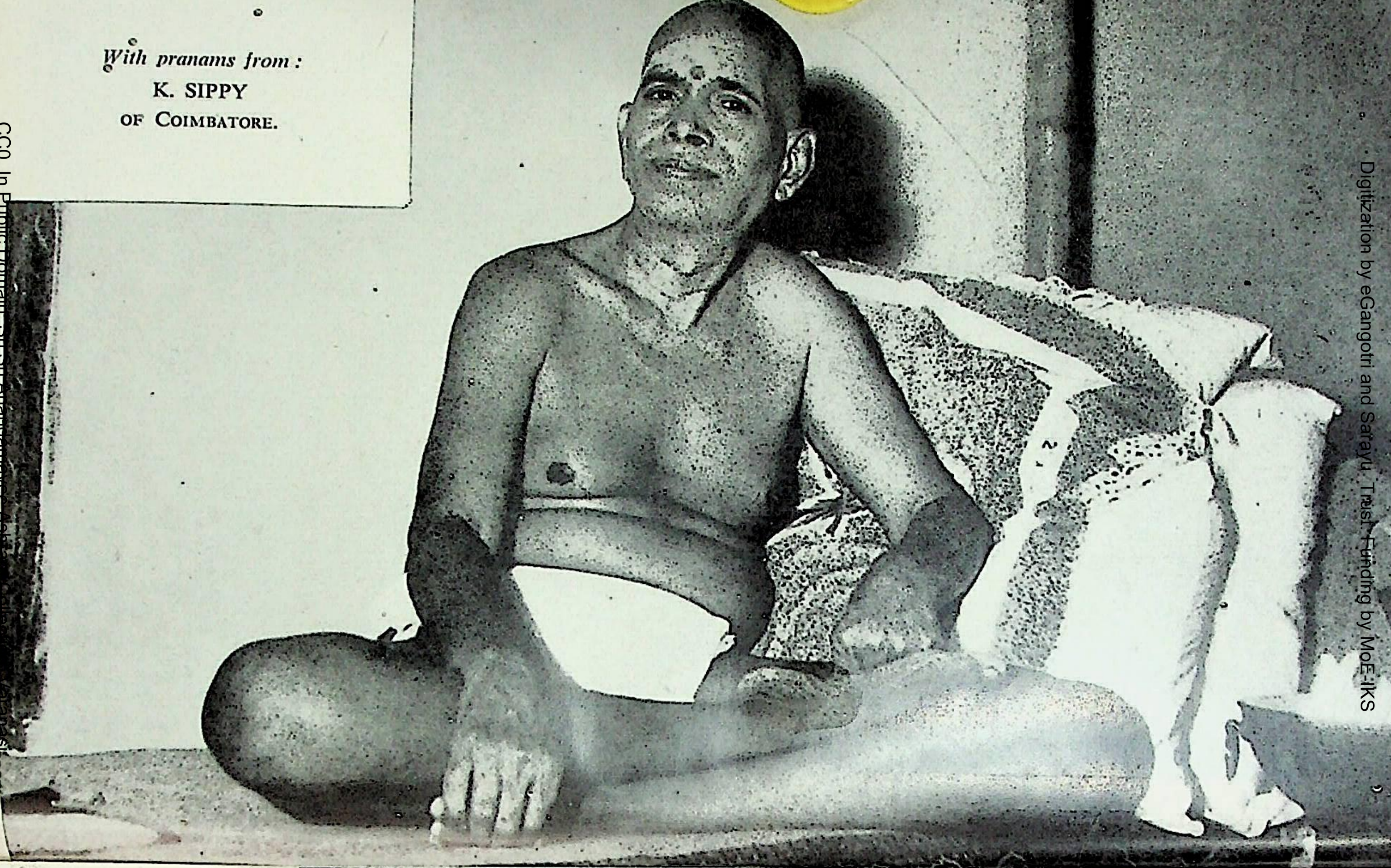

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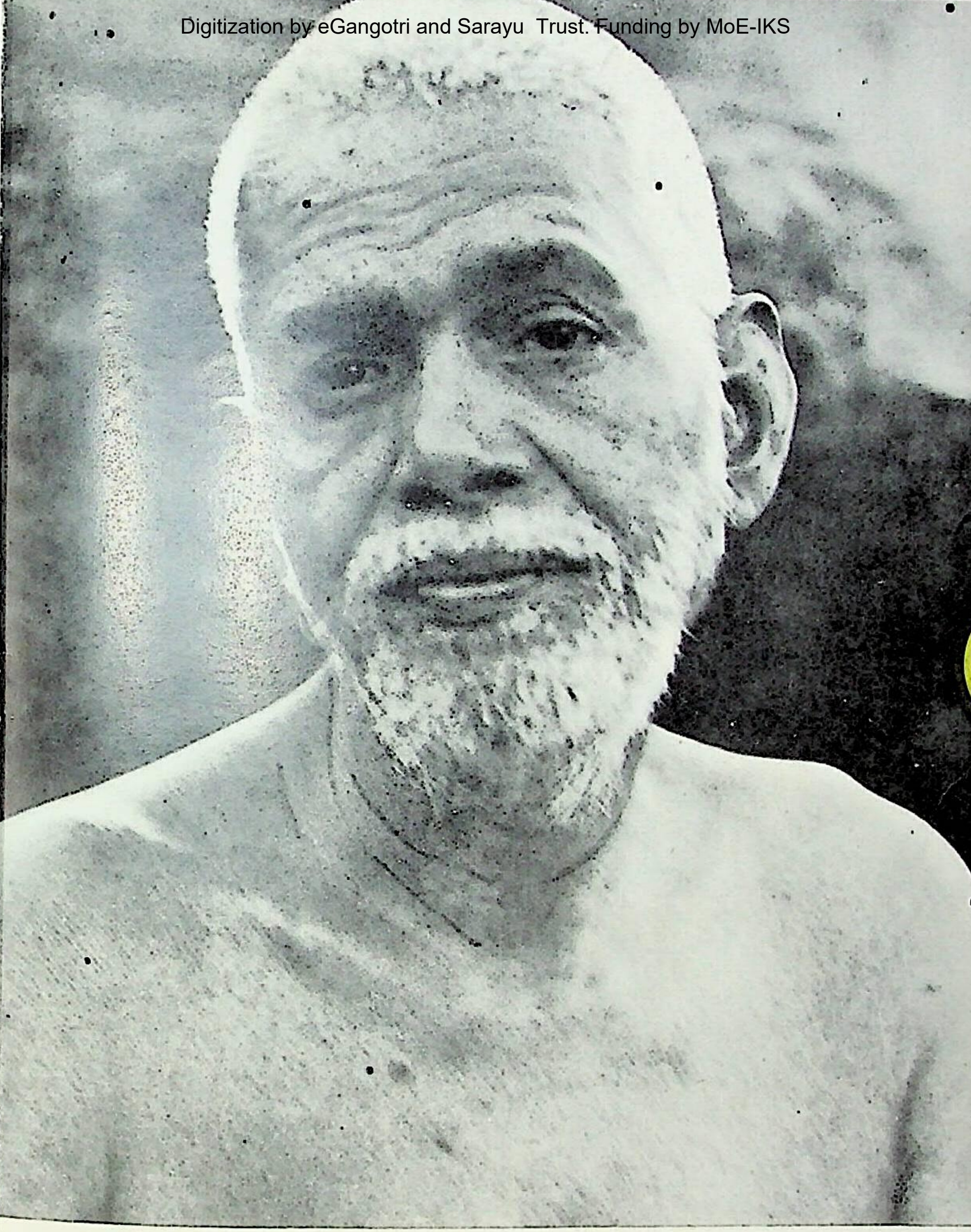

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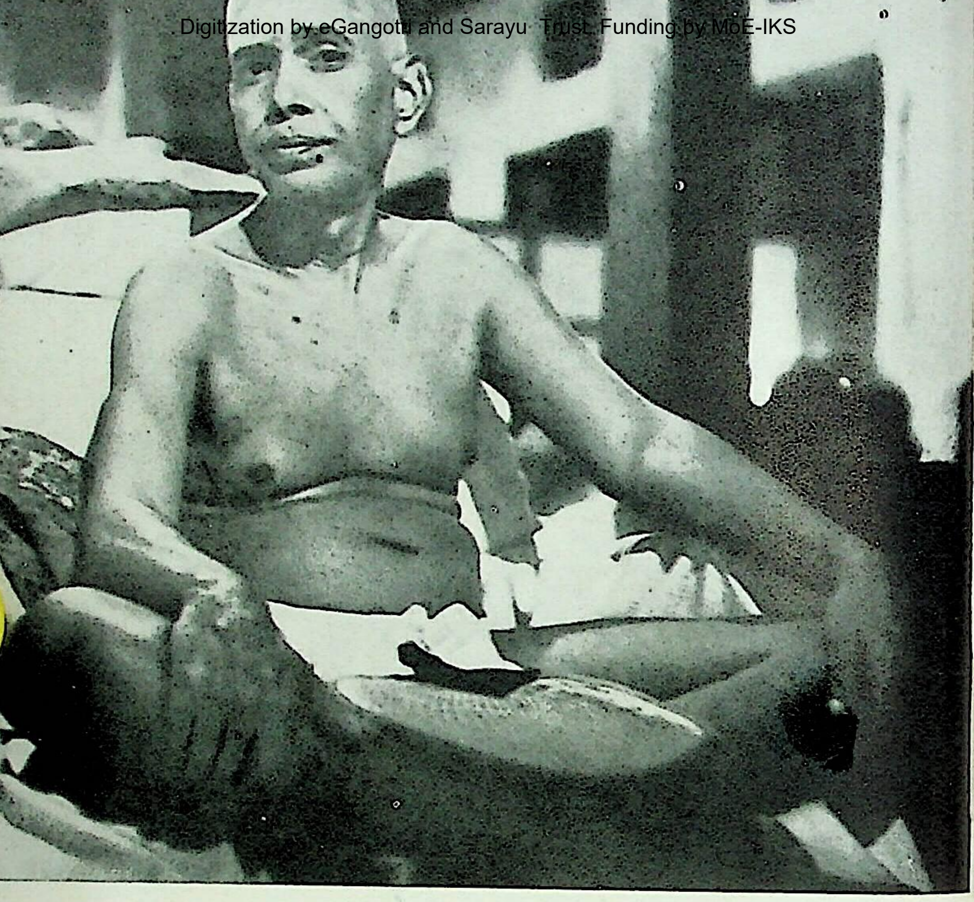

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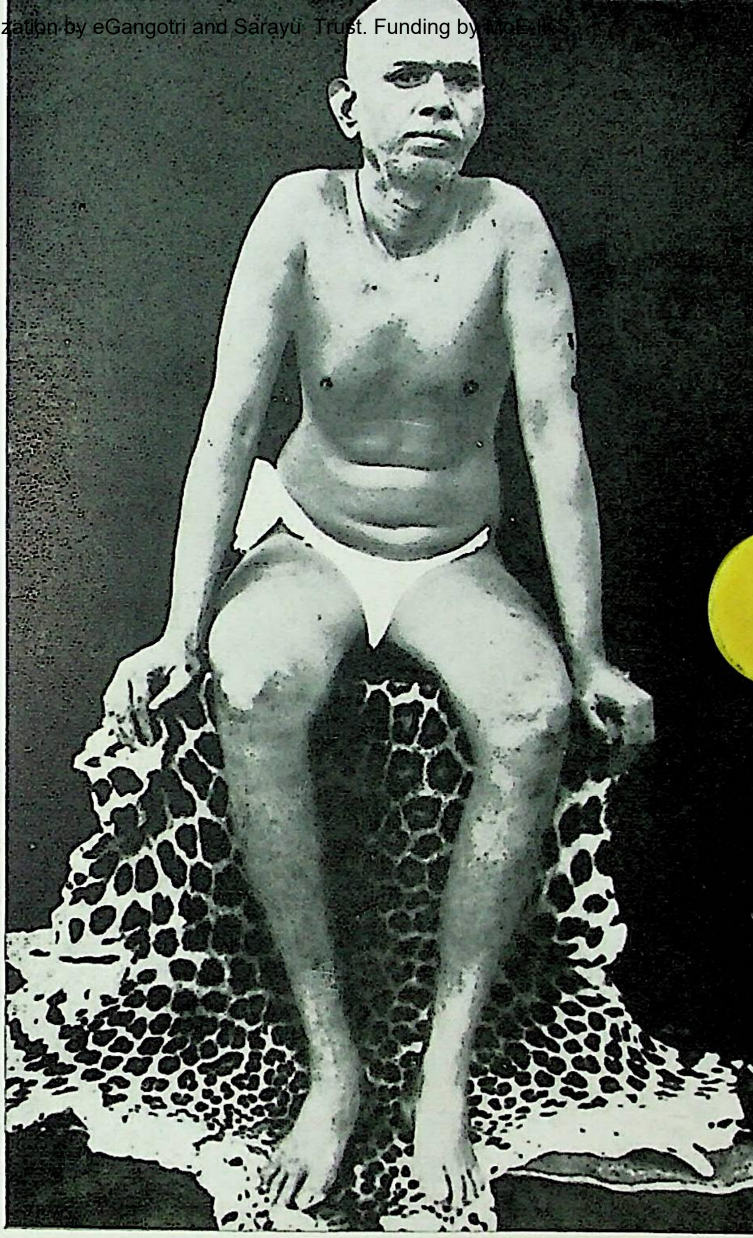

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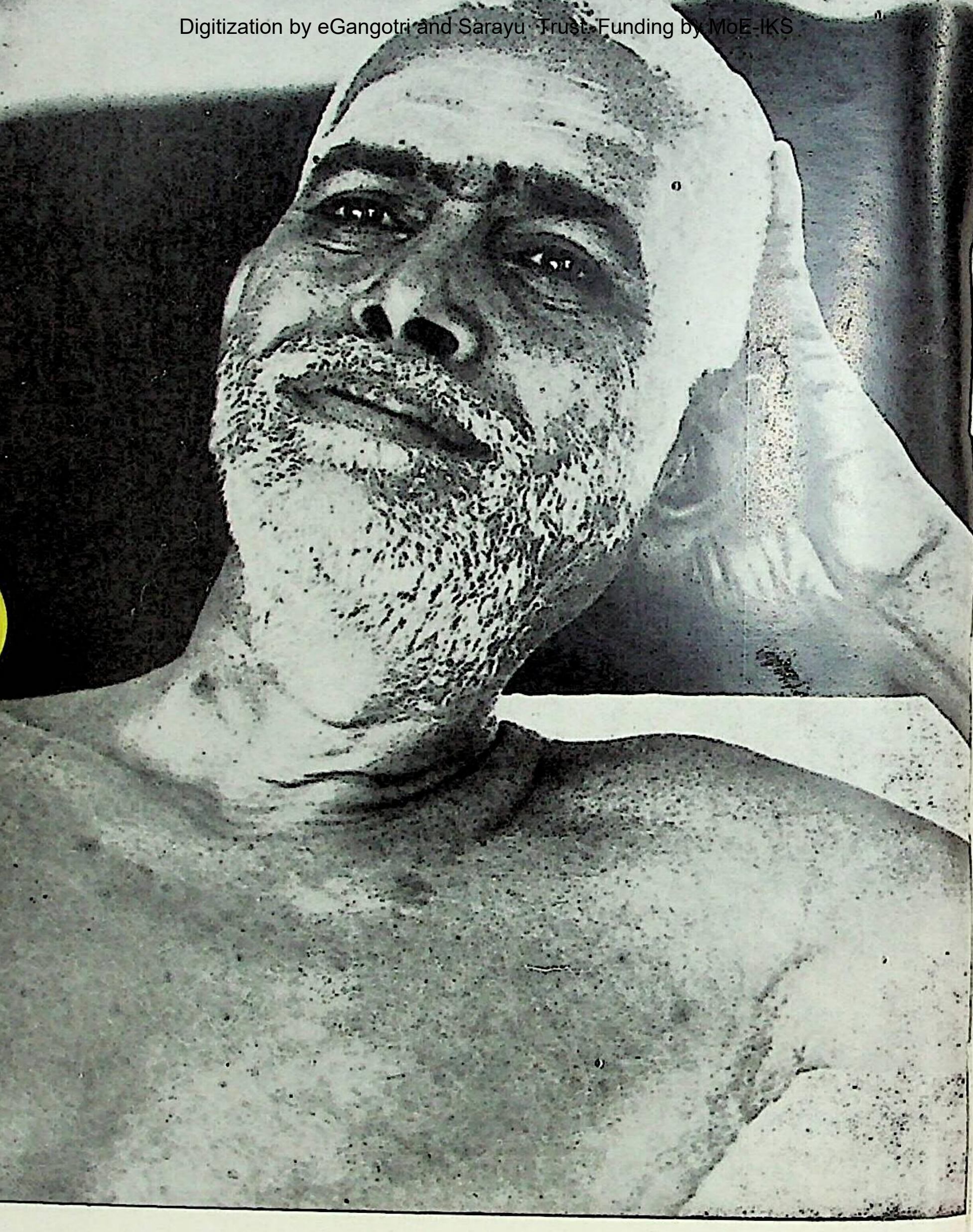

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24
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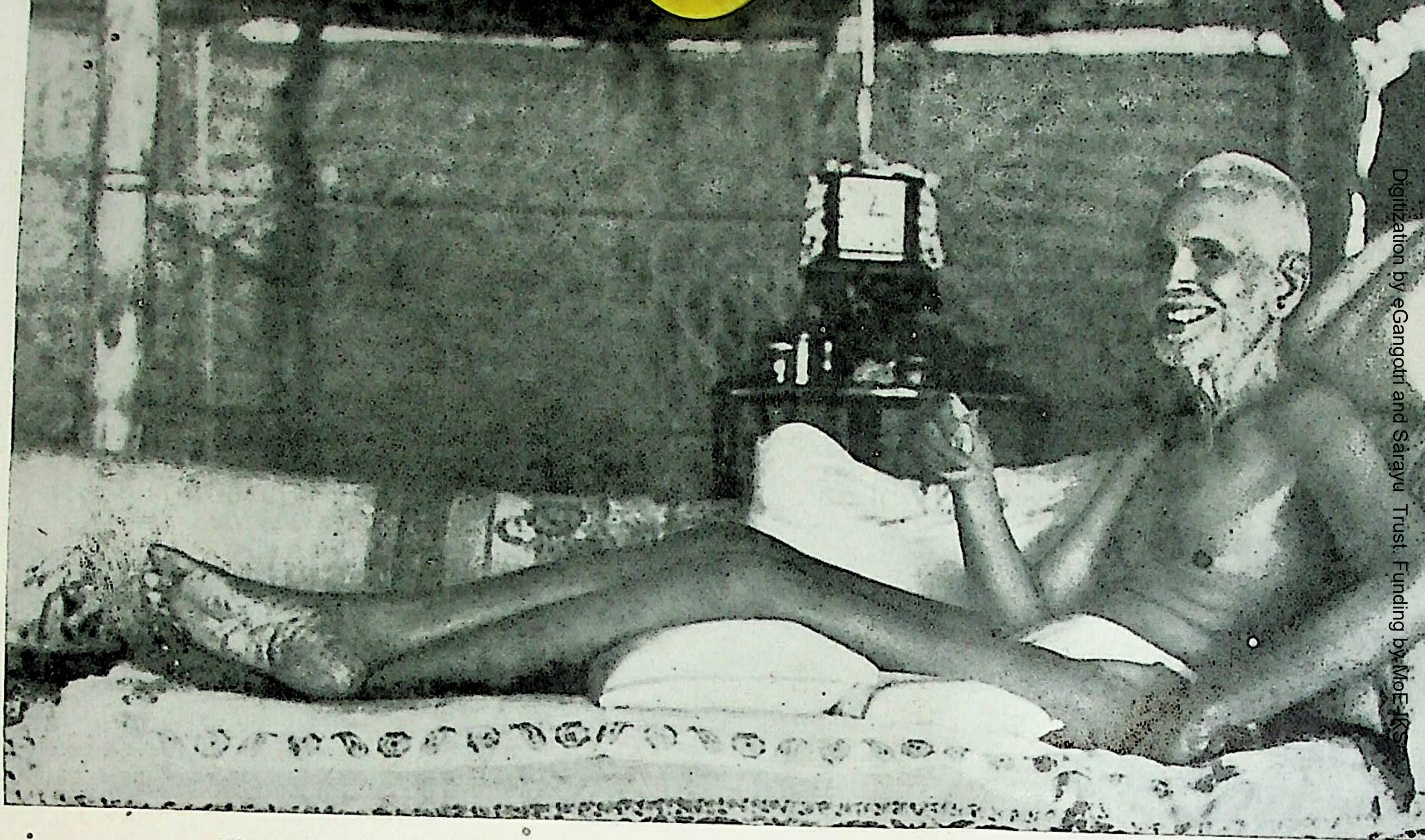

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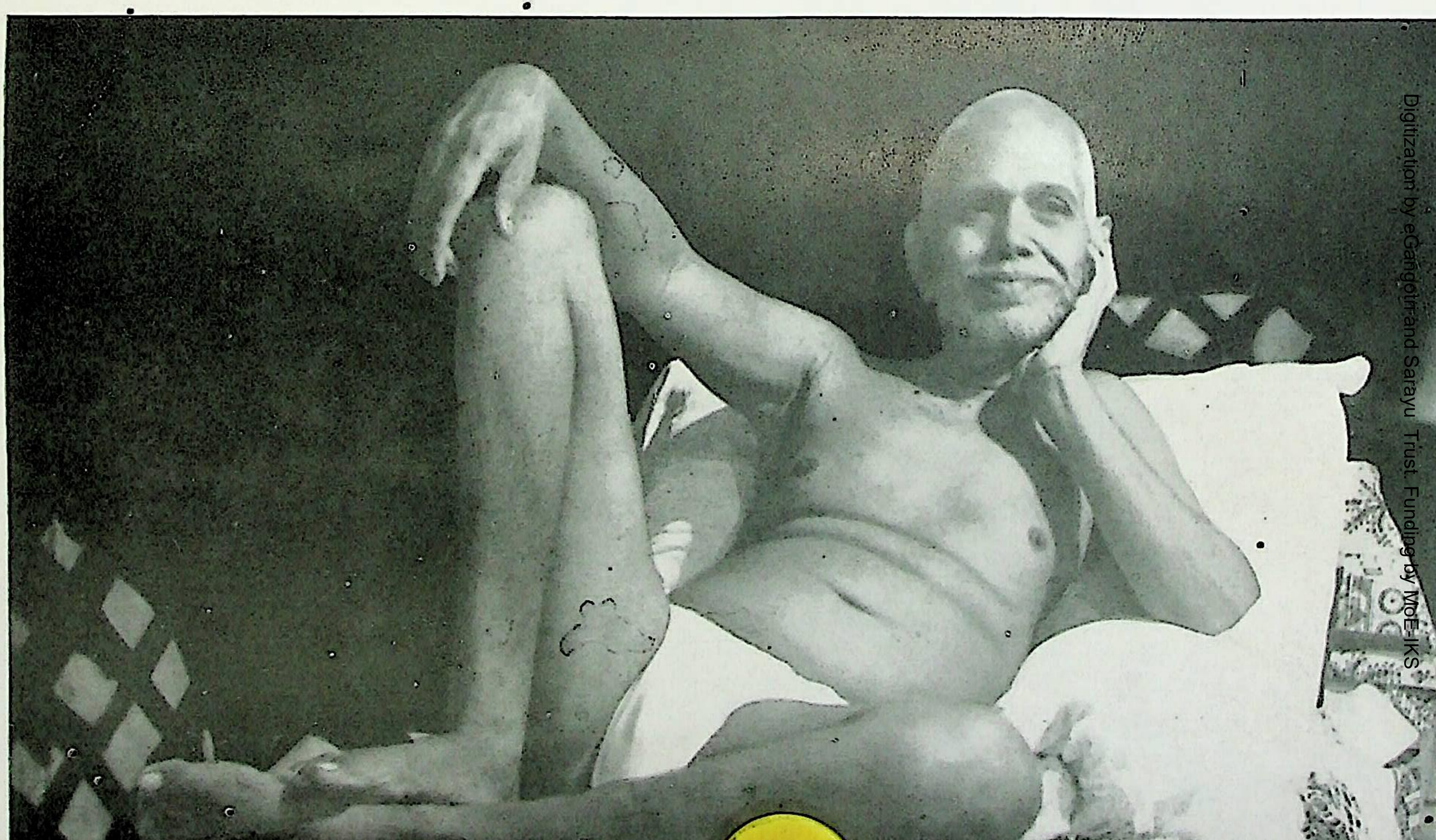

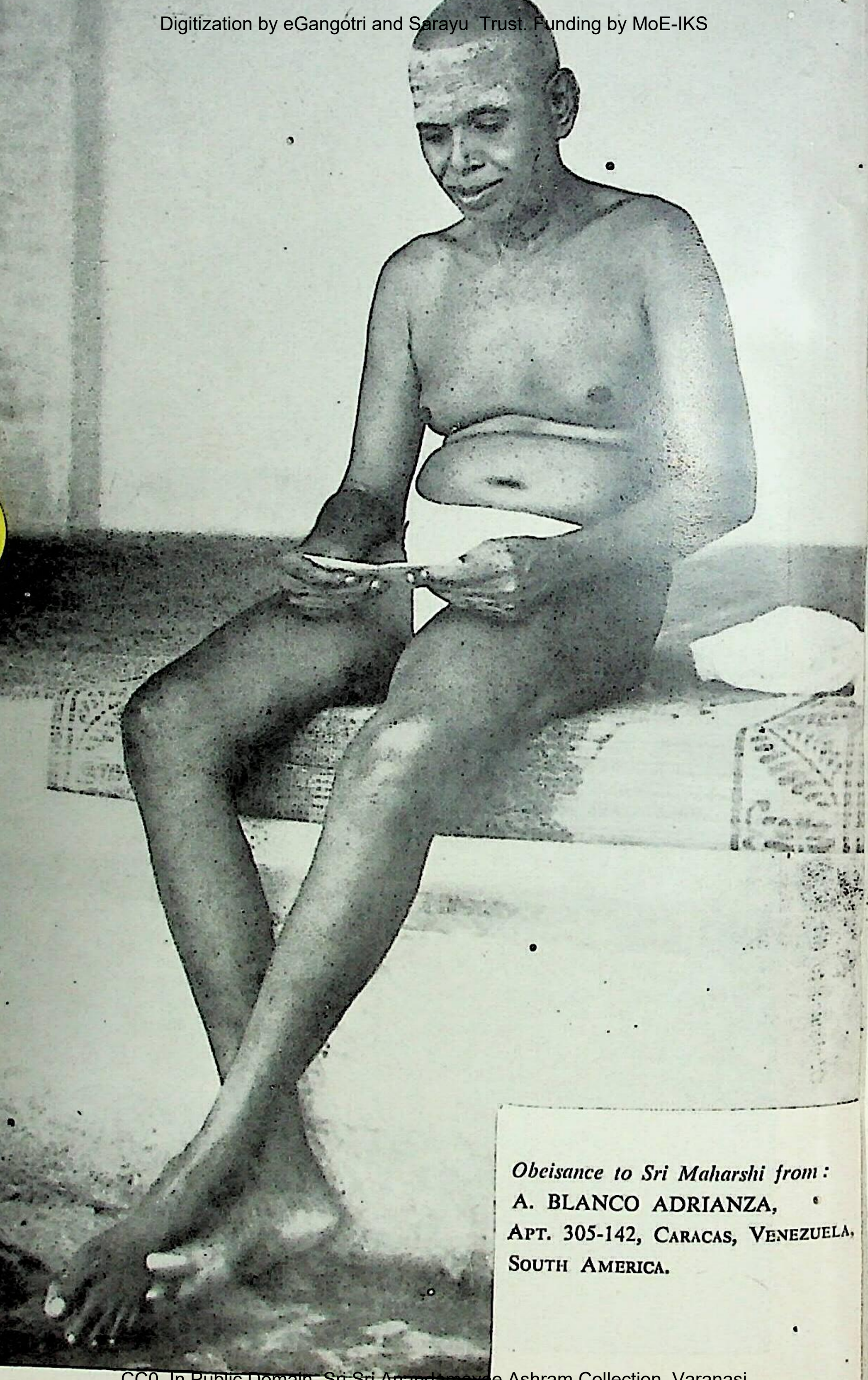

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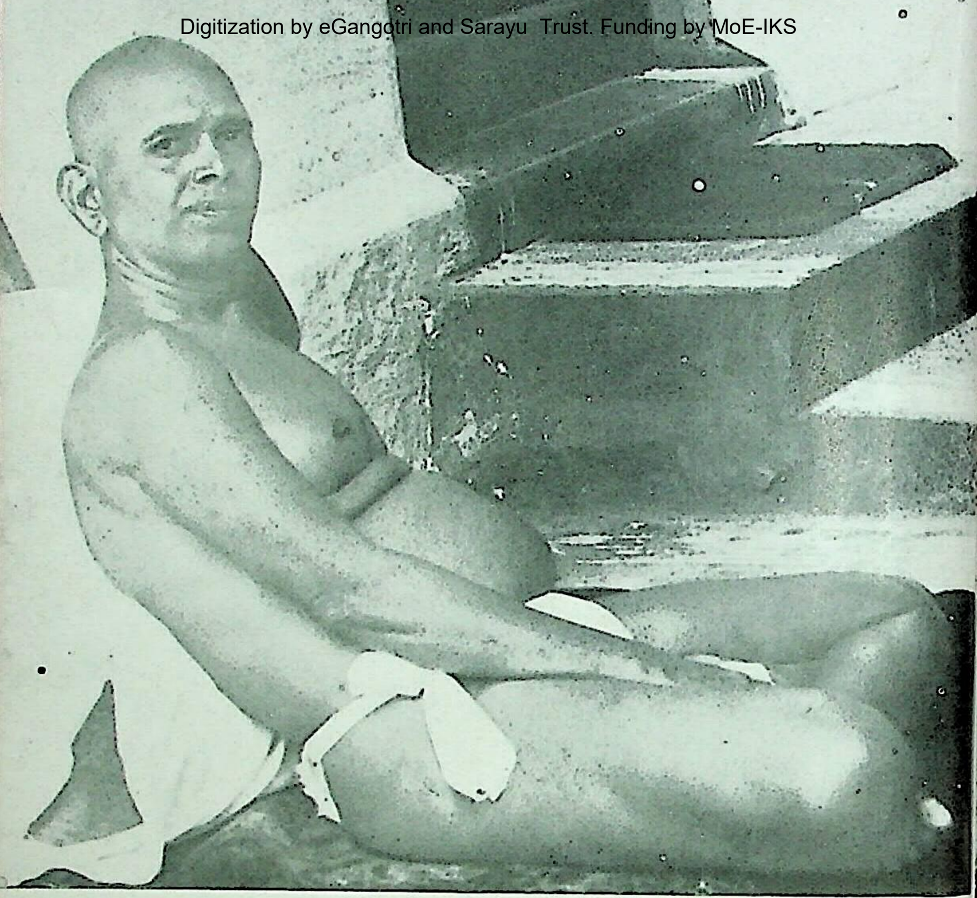
SOUTH AMERICA.

May Sri Bhagavan
who blessed
the installation of
'Sri Chakra Meru'
during the
Kumbhabhishekam
of Sri
Mathrubhuteswara
Shrine (in 1949)
bless the devotees
participating in this
Kumbhabhishekam.



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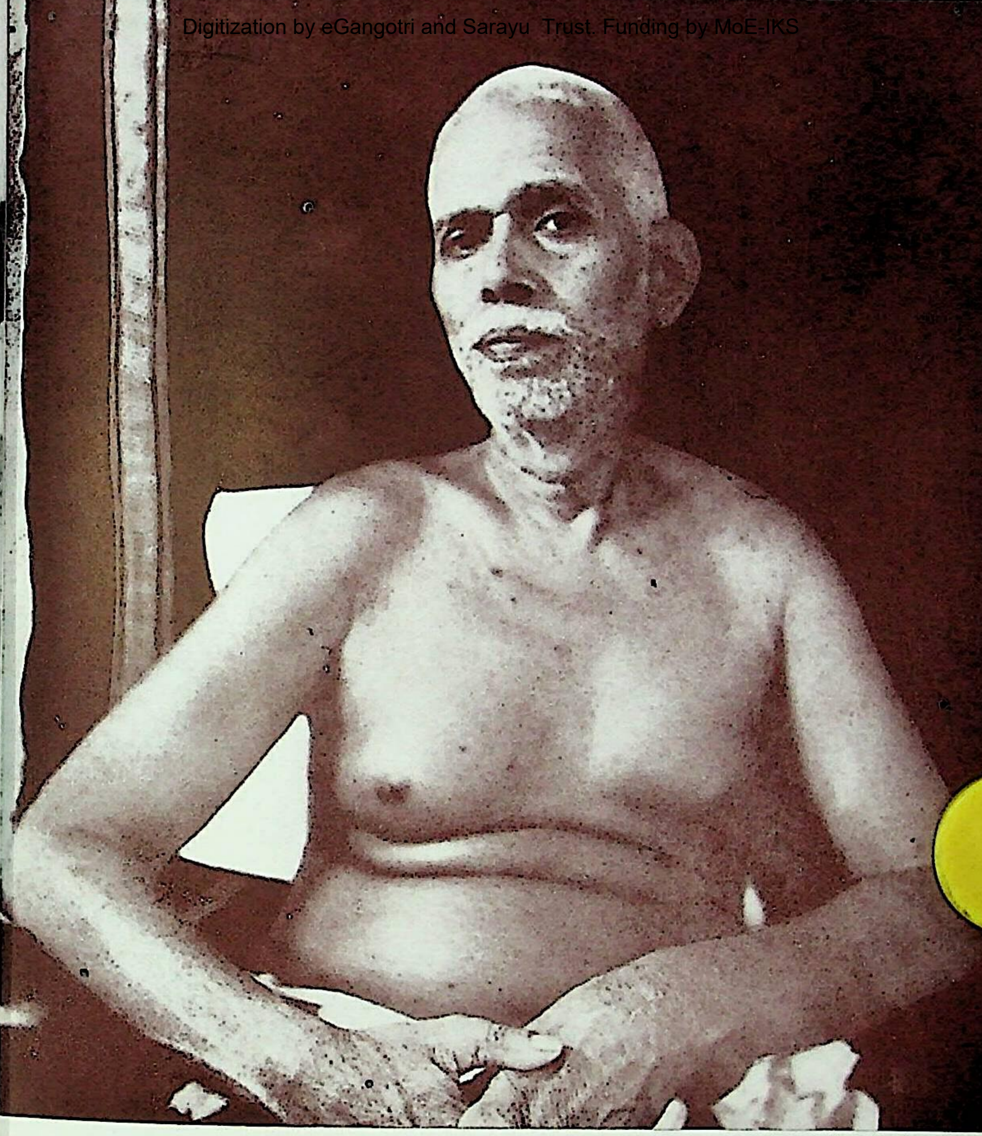

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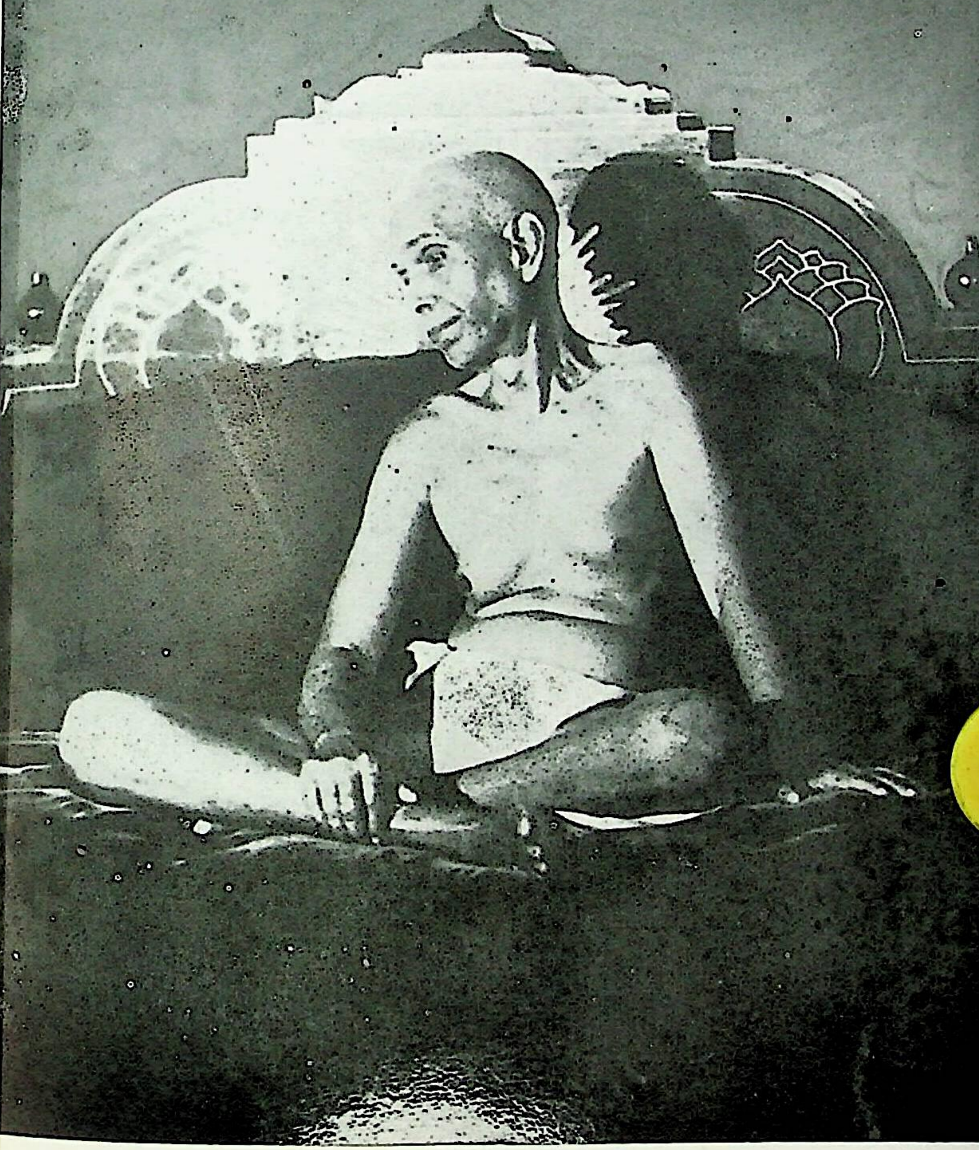

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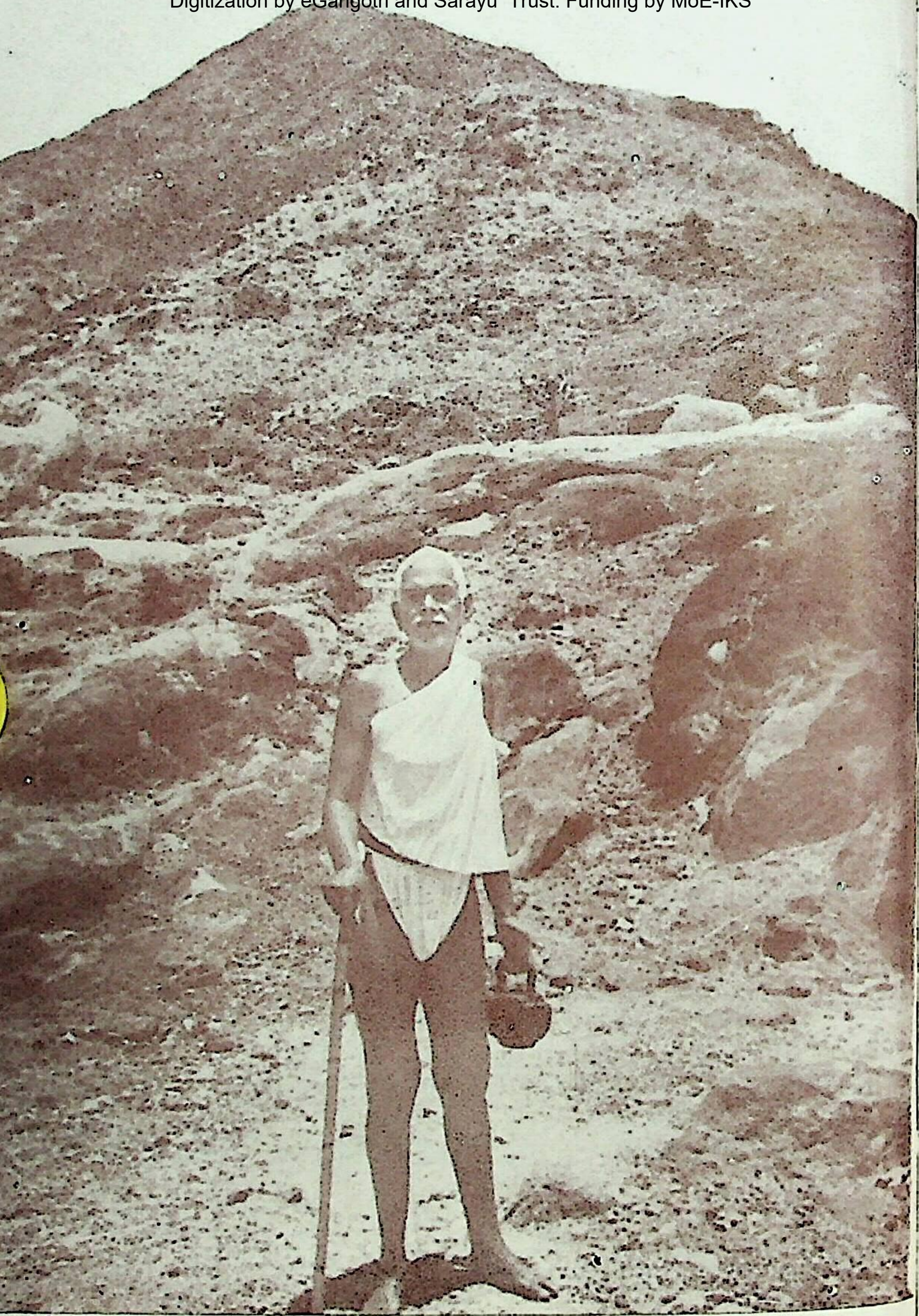

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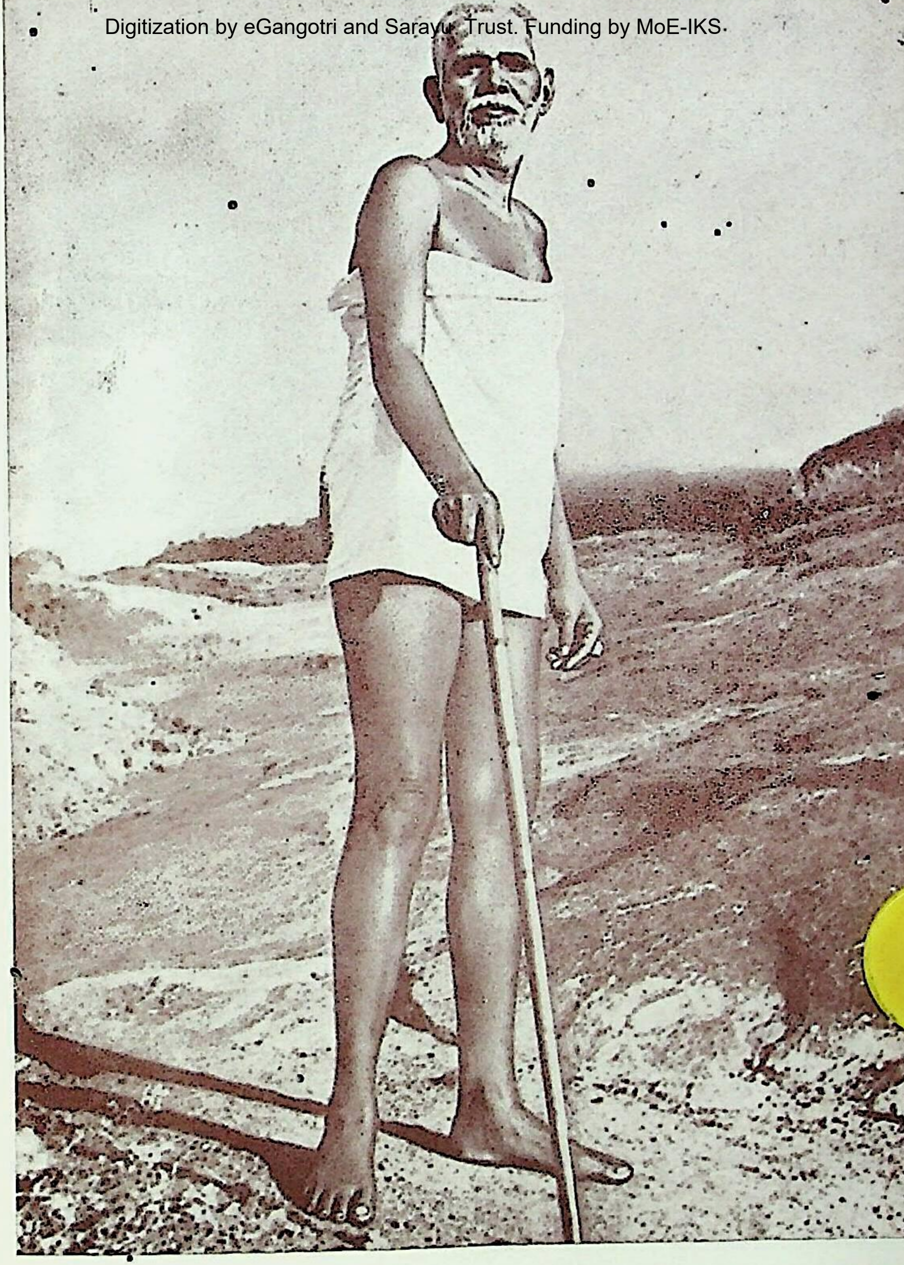

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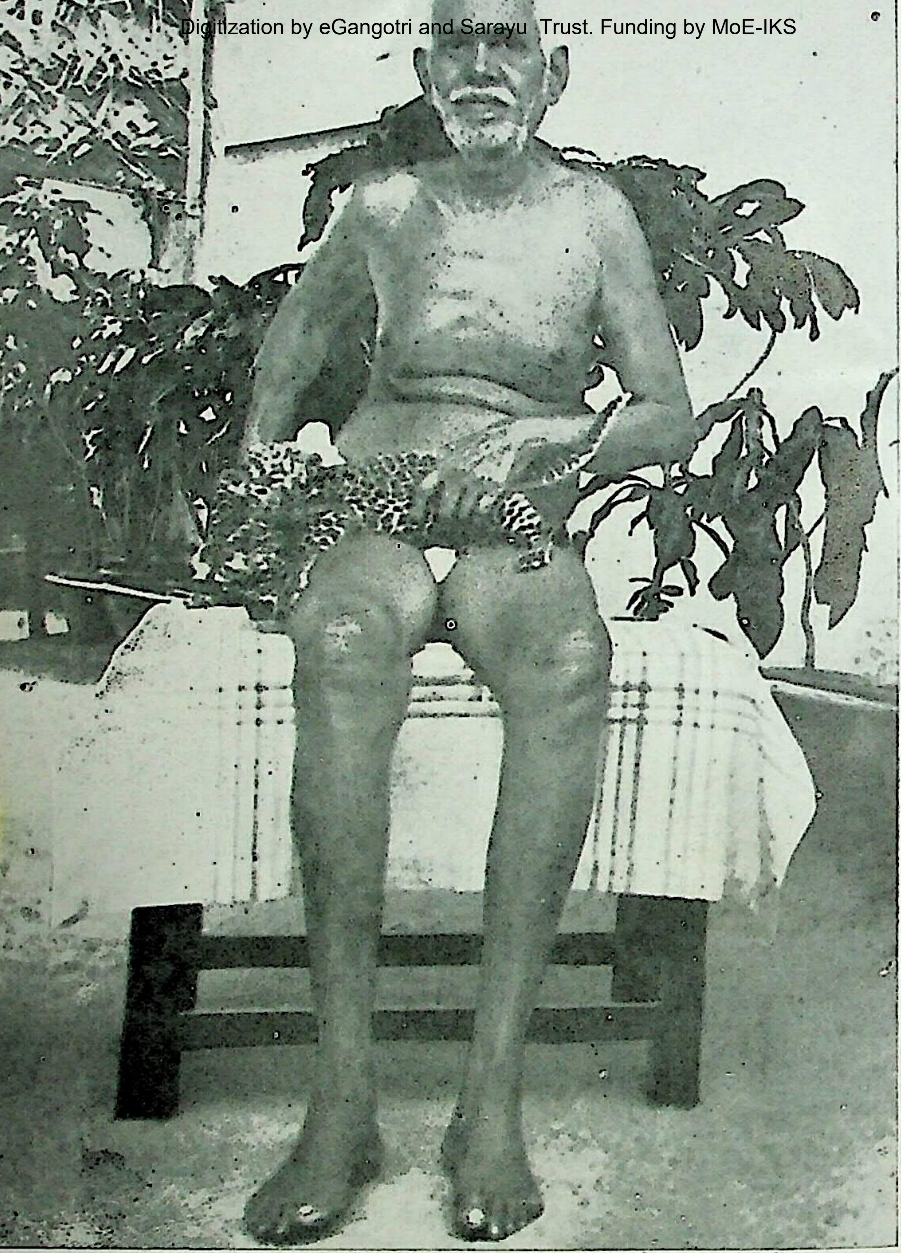

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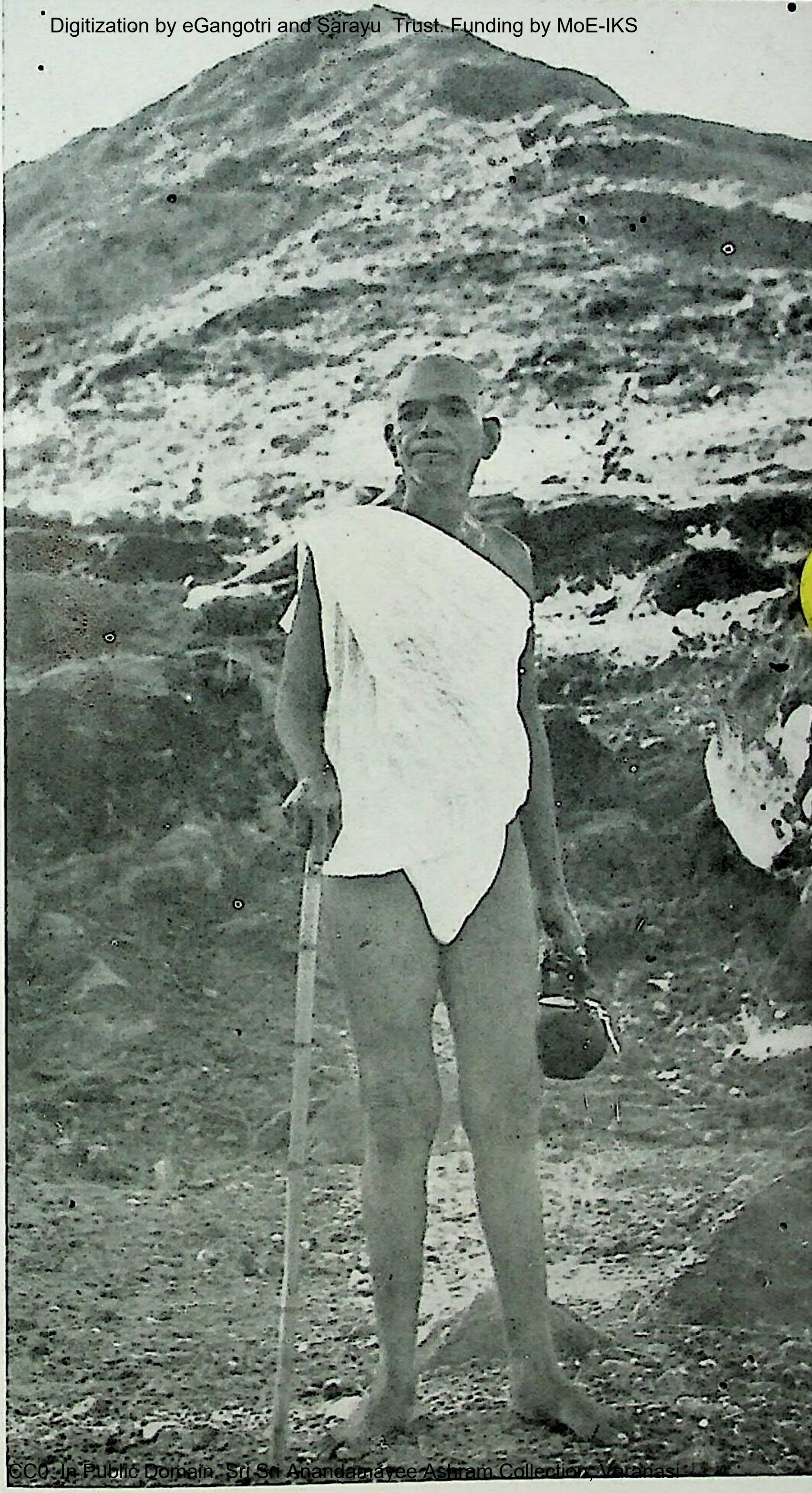

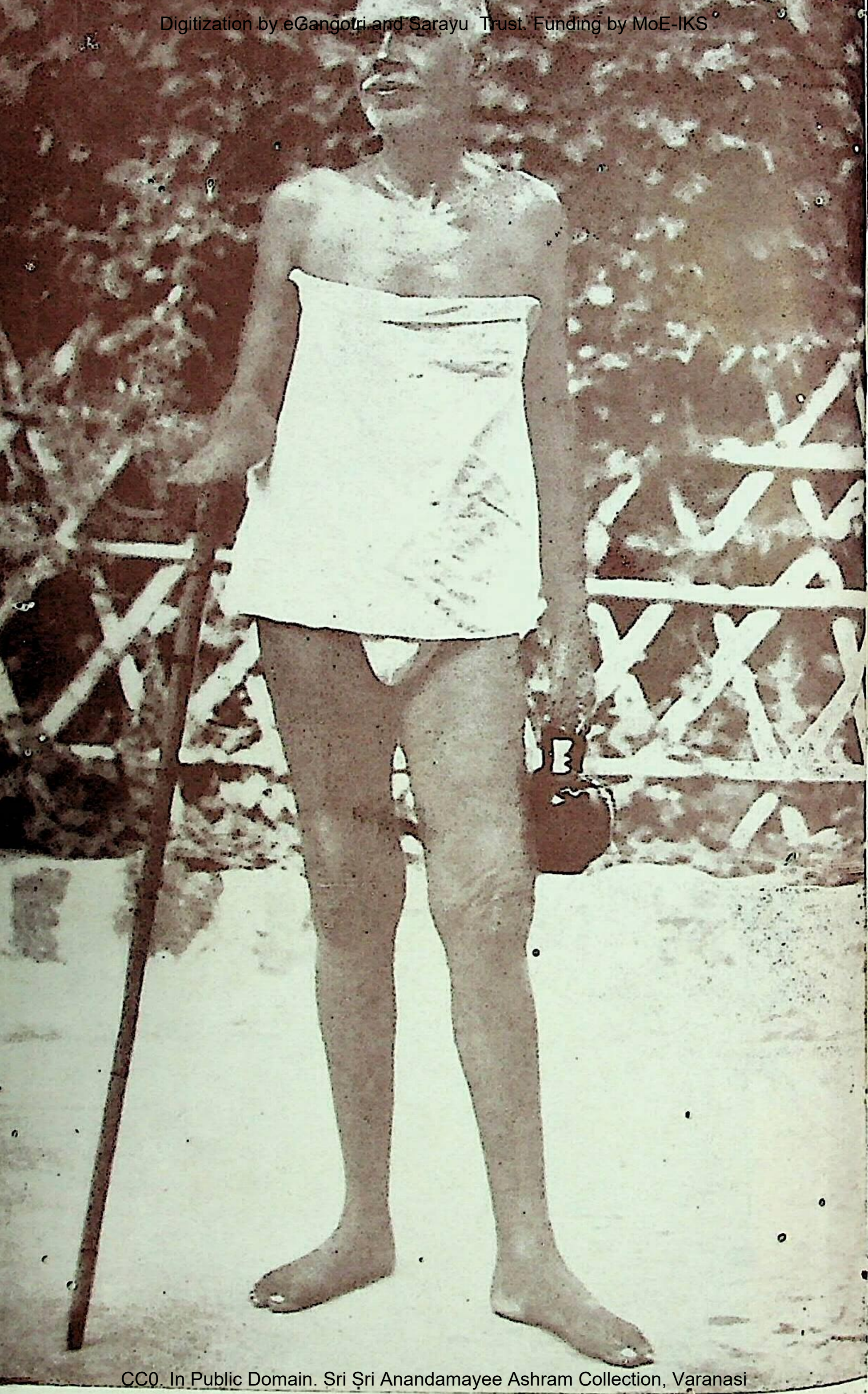

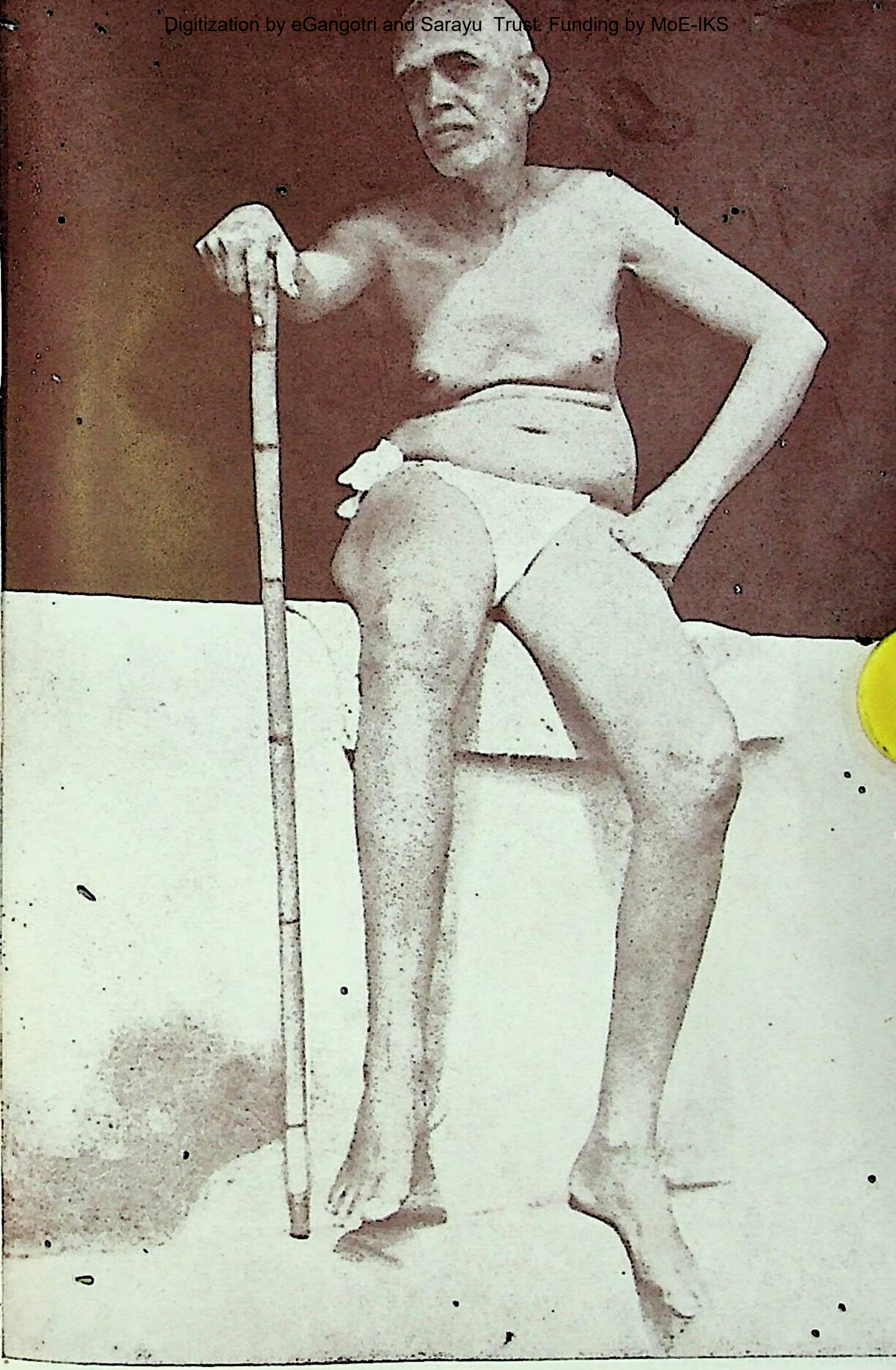

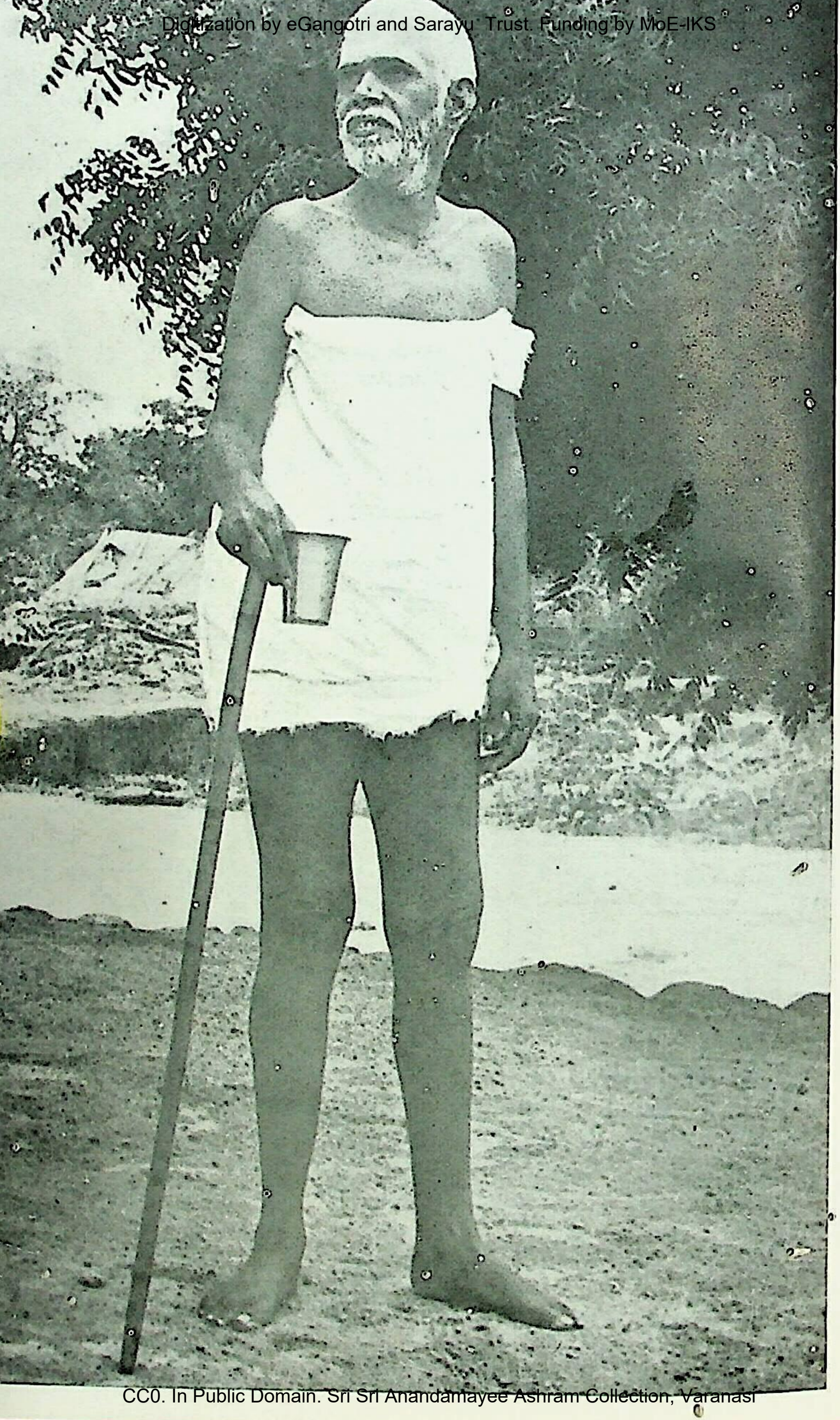

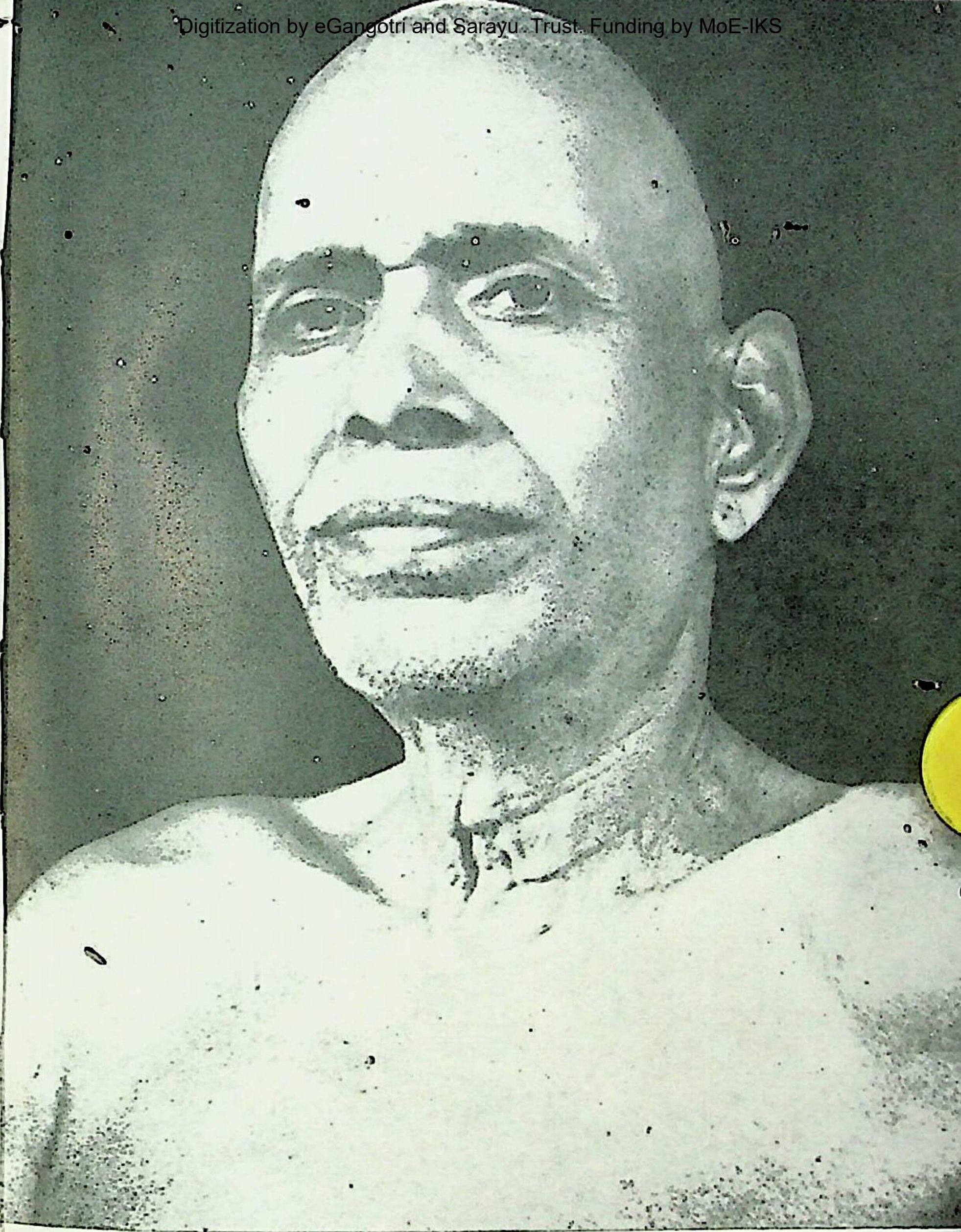

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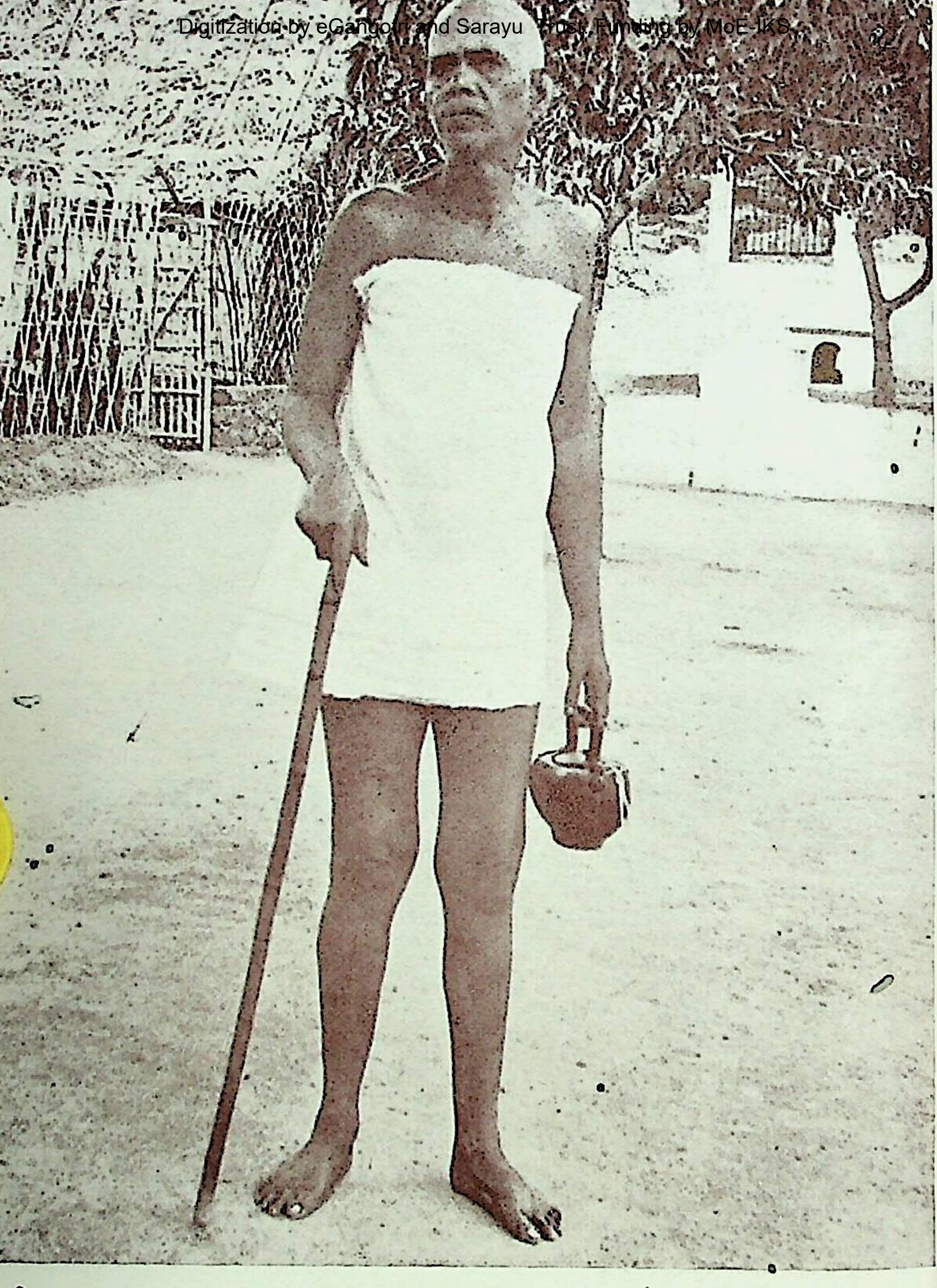

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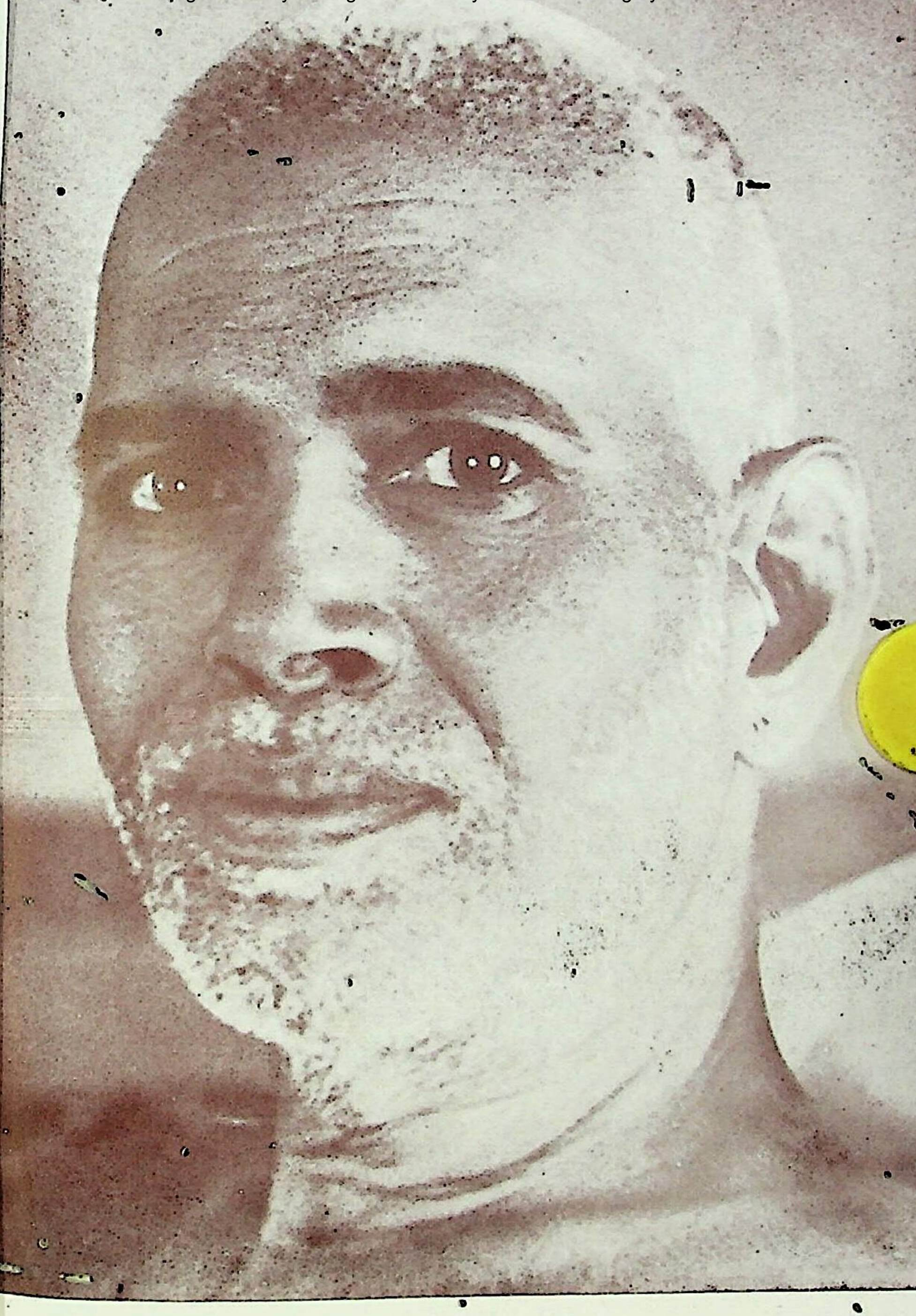

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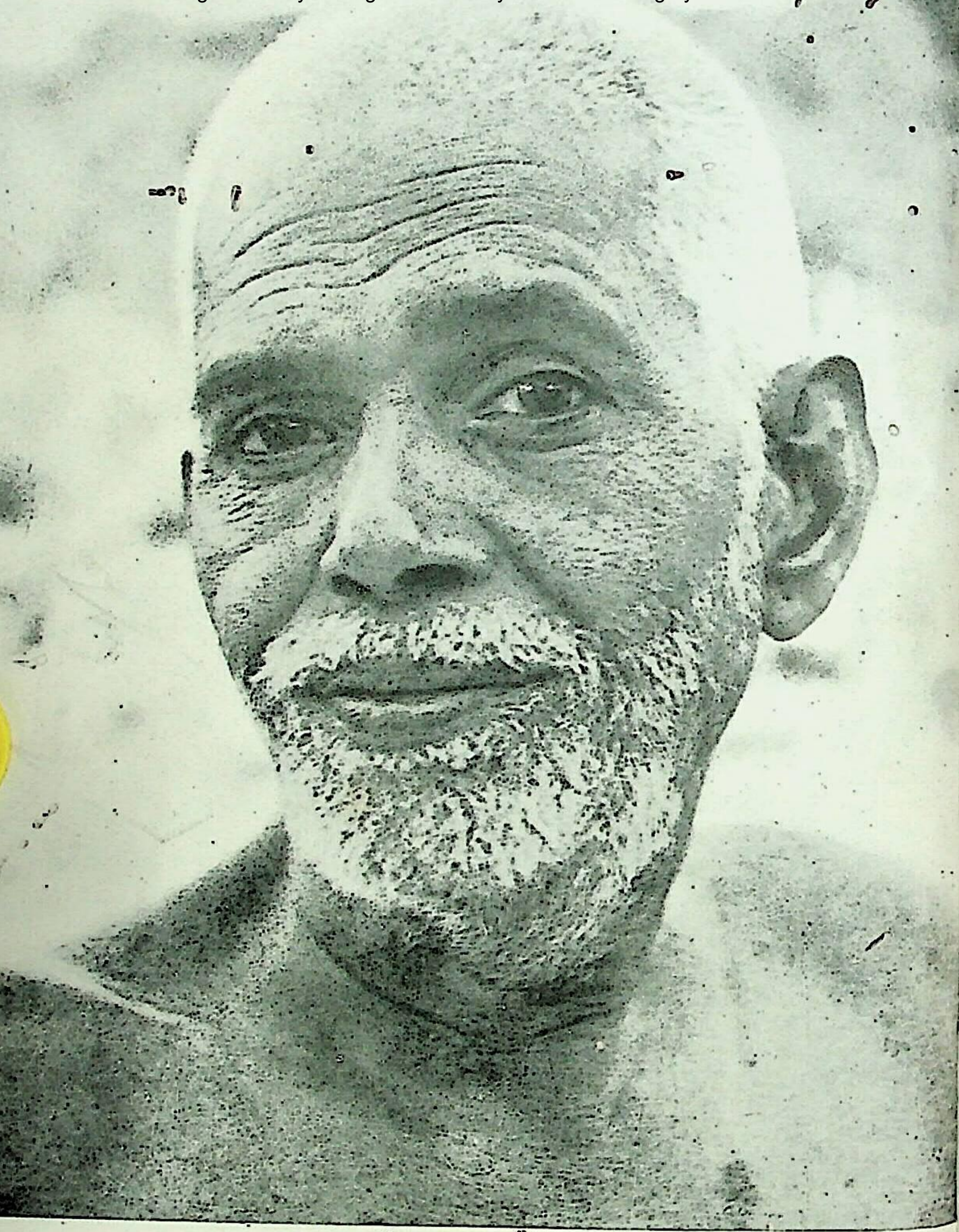

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BEYOND CATEGORIES

"*SEIN*"

THERE is one section of the devotees of Bhagavan who attach great importance to his being an avatar, while others overlook or even deny such overemphasis. Why should we worry? We know that he is more than an Avatar. Indeed, Bhagavan himself once said: "The Jnani is more than an avatar."

There are Hindus who make much of his being a Hindu. Of course, he was brought up a Hindu. He participated in a certain amount of Hindu ritual. But then, as others point out, he did not exclusively advocate Hindu ritual or expect any of his followers to become Hindus. What does it matter? He was more than a Hindu.

Even within Hinduism, was he a Brahmin or a sannyasi? Once again, what does it matter? He was brought up a Brahmin; he left his family and came to Arunachala; but he never took sannyas. He himself declared that he was 'athiasrami', outside the castes and categories, neither Brahmin nor non-Brahmin, neither householder nor sannyasi.

Was he a Guru? He gave no formal initiation, he sometimes denied that he was a guru, but he joined in singing 'Ramana Sat-Guru', and many experienced his Grace and guidance and still do.

Did he teach prayer and belief in God? He said that it is always good to pray and that without God's Grace even the movement of a blade of grass is impossible; but on another occasion, speaking to a different type of person, he said: "Why worry about God? Let him worry about himself; find out who it is that asks whether there is a God."

I do not wish to argue that Bhagavan was a Hindu or not a Hindu, an Avatar or not an Avatar, a theist or a nontheist; what I say is that his purpose was to divert our minds from all forms and categories to the pure Truth of the Self. Let us not waste our time trying to define what Bhagavan was but try to follow him to what IS.

Many great Teachers throughout the ages have set up signposts to the Truth, but what multitudes have gathered around these signposts and built churches and temples there, marvelling how beautifully they were painted, and forgetting that they were only indicators to the Truth beyond. Therefore Bhagavan constantly warned us not to be enthralled by the beauty of any path or any scripture but to turn our minds inwards to find out who it is that follows the path or scripture. All the signposts point to the One Truth, and that is to be found within. That is why Bhagavan said that Truth is simple but men do not want truth, they want mystery. Let us, therefore sacrifice to Bhagavan the mind that seeks to build doctrines and turn instead to the simplicity of Truth that is the very Self of us.

> "My obeisance to Thee
> I bow down to Thee, O Lord!
> Thou facest the south.
> Thou art the Ancient One. I bow down to Thee.
> Thou art Supreme. I bow down to Thee.
> Thou art Mighty. I bow down to Thee.
> Thou art Time. I bown down to Thee.
> Thou art the Word that is in the beginning. I bow down to Thee.
> Thou art the Ruler of the mind. I bow down to Thee."

—*Yajur Veda.*

●

"If His devotee, anywhere, just thinks of Him, there
He overwhelms him with wave after wave of the joy of ecstasy."

So writes Sri Muruganar in his classic work *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai.*

The clock struck four in the afternoon. Sri Bhagavan remarked to me "Brunton is delivering a lecture on 'Bhagavan Ramana and his philosophy' today at 4 p.m. at Madras Christian College. He must have thought of me and prayed before commencing his lecture. Otherwise why should thought of him arise in me just now?"

●

"Dhyana is itself the action, the rite and the effort. It is the most intense and potent of all. No other effort is necessary."—Sri Ramana.

LIGHT FROM THE CENTRE

KITTY

THE Samadhi of Sri Ramana Maharshi, beautifully constructed with stone pillars polished like marble and carved in the traditional manner, is now completed. It will be the centre of the Ashram as the Ashram is the centre of the world for those who are drawn to Bhagavan.

As the world becomes smaller and more chaotic, more and more people from more and more countries and walks of life are drawn to the truth and purity of Bhagavan's teachings. Wherever in the past ritual was considered to be almost an essential part of any religious or spiritual path, now, with the world rushing headlong into confusion, with superficial life geared to speed, with men striving for success and bewildered and discontented with it when it is achieved, people long more and more for peace and an answer to the questions that are being asked not only by a few spiritual seekers but by sufferers from confusion the world over, "Where am I going ?", "What is it all about ?", "Why ?"

And so more people are drawn to Bhagavan and more will come to him to follow his path of Self Inquiry. To recognise the illusory nature of the world and its struggles. The Mountain Path is steep but straight and true and the light of that truth is clear and bright before us for Bhagavan in his goodness has shown us the way shorn of complexities, and in his infinite compassion he guides and helps us when we stumble. His presence can be felt as a very living thing and we are fortunate indeed to have his love and guidance so strongly felt now when the need is so great, and to have such easy and direct access through his teachings to the path of Self Realization.

"The Spiritual force of Self-realisation is far more powerful than the use of all the occult powers."—**BHAGAVAN.**

THE TEMPLE AND THE SHRINE

K. SUBRAHMANYAM

THE ceremonial consecration of the shrine over Bhagavan's Samadhi brings to full expression the Truth of which one aspect is expressed by the Mathrubhutheswarar Temple. The temple is tradition-rich. It has its inner shrines and niches and code of elaborate observances and rituals that have the sanction of ages. Bhagavan founded it, personally attending to many details, such as the installation of the Sri Chakra. His spirit amply broods over it. But, in a sense, the Samadhi is exclusively his, proclaiming not a tradition, but the life, whose body are all great traditions, whose shadows are man's mind with its inventions and creations, even the most ambitious and most aspiring.

It is not, perhaps, a profitless piece of ingenuity to compare the Temple and the Samadhi, on the one hand, with the *Upadesa Saram* and the *Forty Verses* on the other. Man's mind, left without exhortation and warning, aspires to scale to Spirit by piling up goodness and working out its own purity — trying to leap beyond its own shadow. Goodness is such because through it Spirit draws us towards Itself. "None is good save one, that is God" says Jesus. The ultimate Purity is indifferently called Visuddhi and Nirvana by Buddhism, because man's notions of purity do not touch the ultimate, much less do they constitute It — It is beyond attributes. The *Forty Verses* begin, even in the first invocatory verse, with the affirmation that one can only Be, never *know* Being. Sri Ramakrishna quotes a sage as saying to a candidate for discipleship : "Give away your mind and I shall fill you with Knowledge." The *Forty Verses* elaborate this truth. May one not take the Samadhi to symbolise it?

The *Upadesa Saram* does not relax the austerity of the *Forty Verses*. The 25th verse declares "Let one shed the conditioning influences (*upadhis*) that obscure one's being and that is God-experience." But from this pinnacle of Truth it evaluates all the known disciplines of the Hindu faith and grades them accordingly: Karma, Puja, Japa, Dhyana, Bhakti (with the various modes of each of them). The corridors of the Temple of tradition are thus lit up by Spirit. The Temple and the Samadhi — one may pass from each to the other.

Bhagavan both fulfils and transcends.

RAMANA, THE GRACE

SURI NAGAMMA

ONCE a devotee comes under Sri Ramana's compassionate look he will be like a person caught in the jaws of a tiger and it is impossible for him to escape until he realises his SELF through the path of Self-enquiry or until he gets fully absorbed in the SELF through the path of devotion. In *Unnadi Nalubadi,* Bhagavan has written that, "Self is the eye; the eye which is endless." He used to say "When the eye sees the outer world, it is the mind; when it sees the world inside, it is the Self. It becomes one or the other according to circumstances." In the case of Bhagavan, the eye is under his control. If his compassionate look penetrates the mind of a devotee, all his worries, both bodily and mental, disappear, his *prarabdha karmas* get annihilated and the way is thus paved for ultimate deliverance.

●

"What you were really unaware of in deep sleep is your bodily existence. You are confounding this bodily awareness with the true Awareness of the Self which is eternal. *Prajnana,* which is the Source of 'I-am'-ness, ever subsists unaffected by the three transitory states of the mind, thus enabling you to retain your identity unimpaired. *Prajnana* is also beyond the three states, because it can subsist without them and in spite of them." — BHAGAVAN.

SRI RAMANA: THE HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

DAVID TEPLITZ

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI exemplifies the Truth and the Transcendental Consciousness as expressed in the Bhagavad Gita and in the Upanishads. He was a man who was firmly established in the "egoless state". Although he had never had any formalized education concerning the real 'Self', nor was initiated into its traditional and ancient lore, he was a Guru in the fullest meaning of the term, a dispeller of darkness, avidya.

His method of 'Maha Yoga', the direct method of self-analysis, has little in common with other forms of Yoga, and is quite simple and free from mysteries, concerning itself with the utter 'Truth' of our being. It frees its followers from false beliefs and enables them to pursue the quest of the true 'Self, which transcends all dogmas and creeds.

In Maha-Yoga, knowledge is considered ignorance and therefore a hindrance to attaining liberation which is the essence of the Upanishads. Maha-Yoga is a process of unlearning, much as is present day Western Psycho-analysis but going much farther.

If religion is a living truth and has any vitality, it must be capable of producing men who bear witness to its truths and confirm faith from their experiences. In the Indian tradition, religion has not meant an imaginative or intellectual apprehension of Reality, but its embodiment is regenerated living. Religion energizes our consciousness, transforming our character to make us new men.

Sri Ramana has provided a pathway similar to that of Western Psycho-analysis, recognizing the experiential aspect of the inner man, but going beyond the psychic to the Spiritual, beyond the individual to the Universal.

At Tiruvannamalai, in South India, Sri Ramana emanated the most intense vibration of Divine Love actively for well over fifty years. His living incarnation of Divine Realization is proof of the Infinite which dwells within each of us. If we would but dive down deep into the Heart, and ask 'Who am I?' and just plain be still and Be, it will be revealed to us. The pain and unhappiness which we sustain is based on ignorance of the Real Self. It is now, that is most crucial to us in society. We are all but one. That Self is Infinite, timeless, spaceless, and Infinite Love.

DIVINE GRACE

A. DEVARAJA MUDALIAR

THERE is no believer in God but craves for divine grace. It is therefore well we know what exactly it is, how it works and where and how to obtain it for assuaging our pains and relieving our distress. Bhagavan used to say 'People who come here frequently appeal to me that I should grant them grace. They seem to think Grace is something I keep in a big box under lock and key, and that I should open it and give out of it the grace they seek. Grace is always there. There is no God without grace. Grace is another name for God."

Now this grace can be got only by yearning for it and striving for it. We must either adopt the Vichara method, and enquire 'Who am I?' or if we feel too weak for that, adopt the alternative method of surrender, both recommended by our Bhagavan. Let us follow whichever of these two methods appeals to most.

●

"Consciousness is always Self-consciousness. If you are conscious of anything you are essentially conscious of yourself. Unself-conscious existence is a contradiction in terms. It is no existence at all. It is merely attributed existence, whereas true Existence, the *Sat*, is not an attribute, it is the Substance itself. It is the *Vastu*." — SRI MAHARSHI.

THE TURNING POINT

NATANANANDAR

I WAS twenty years old in 1917-18 and a school-master. Being naturally of a pious disposition I used to go about from place to place frequently to have darshan of the deities installed in temples. A noble soul who saw this brought to me of his own accord the two books (in Tamil), *Sri Ramakrishna Vijayam* and *Sri Vivekananda Vijayam*, and asked me to read them. As soon as I had read them I was seized with an intense longing for obtaining the vision of God and for finding out the guru who would show the way to it. While I was engaged in this search I heard about the extraordinary greatness of Bhagavan Sri Ramana through a holy person whom I happened to meet at Sriperumbudur. On 2nd May 1918, I saw Sri Ramana for the first time at Skandasramam on Arunachala.

I beseeched him fervently thus : "It is my great desire that I should actually experience your gracious wisdom. Kindly fulfil my desire." In those days Sri Ramana was not speaking much. Still he spoke kindly as follows : "Is it the body in front of me which desires to obtain my grace ? Or is it the awareness within it ? If it is the awareness, is it not now looking upon itself as the body and making this request ? If so, let the awareness first of all know its real nature. It will then automatically know God and my grace. The truth of this can be realised even now and here."

Besides speaking thus, he also explained it as follows through my own experience. "It is not the body which desires to obtain the grace. Therefore it is clear that it is awareness which shines here as 'you'. To you who are of the nature of awareness there is no connection during sleep with the body, the senses, the vital airs and the mind. On waking up you identify yourself with them, even without your knowledge. This is your experience. All that you have to do hereafter is to see that you do not identify yourself with them in the states of waking and dream also and to try to remain yourself as in the state of deep sleep — as you are by nature unattached you have to convert the state of ignorant deep sleep, in which you were formless and unattached, into conscious deep sleep. It is only by doing this that you can remain established in your real nature. You should never forget that this experience will come only through long practice. This experience will make it clear that your real nature is not different from the nature of God."

THE MAHARSHI, MY BEACON LIGHT

PROF. R. K. VISWANATHAN

IN the *Bhagavad Gita* there is a description in the second chapter of One who has attained Realization. Arjuna wants to know from Lord Krishna the distinguishing marks of the sage of established wisdom and the means of attaining that steady knowledge of the Self. It is said there that such a man will not hanker after pleasures and will be free from attachment, fear and anger. The man of wisdom is able to withdraw his mind and senses from sense-objects just like a tortoise withdraws its limbs into its shell. He will not be disturbed by tumultuous sounds and noises. He finds in his Self full comfort for the Self abandoning all desires which shake the mind. He will be always fixed in calms of lofty contemplation. The Maharshi had all these attributes. Anyone who had seen him would testify to this.

●

If the mind becomes introverted through enquiry into the Source of *Aham-vritti*, the *vasanas* become extinct, and in the absence of the reflecting medium the phenomenon of reflection, namely, the mind, also disappears being absorbed into the Light of the one Reality, the Heart. That is the sum and substance of all that an aspirant need know." — SRI BHAGAVAN.

IDENTITY WITH THE UNIVERSAL

KAVYAKANTA GANAPATHI MUNI *

LORD, my present inner experience achieved by Sri Bhagavan's look of Grace, I understand as inherence in the *Vijnana Atman* — the sphere of Pure Intellect. I clearly experience myself in the cave of the Heart quite distinct from the body; yet I have not ceased to look upon the world as different from myself. And so I consider that this is not the complete and ultimate inherence in the Self. May Sri Bhagavan himself bless me with that *Purna Nishta*, by his gracious look capable of traversing any distance. My experience of ecstasy hitherto was particularly dynamic — it was pure and simple flow of power; but now it is perceived to be a flow of light giving a sense of utmost lightness. My faith is getting strengthened that the Deities are working upon me for the fulfilment of the great task, impelled by Bhagavan Sri Maharshi's look of grace. May Sri Bhagavan send me as reply his Look of Compassion!

The *Sat-darsana* Sanskrit verse-rendering was finished on Saturday .... From that Saturday my vision became distinct. I appear to see all things as One Real Existence. It is my prayer to Bhagavan that this vision may culminate in permanent experience. I see as bubbles in water all changing forms in One Existence; and I try to discard the former and experience pure existence alone everywhere.

Bhagavan, Slayer of Maya's offspring, the sense of separate existence in me has not yet vanished. I know that one flash of your wish could bless me with the experience of absolute identity with the Universal. I also know that no wish whatsoever could consciously set foot in your heart.

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* Extracts from letters written by Kavyakanta Ganapathi Muni in 1931 to Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, from Anandashrama, Sirsi, Mysore State.

My Lord, I consider everything achieved when on full maturity of one's *tapas* the ego gets annihilated, spontaneous Self-awareness is well established and all the senses are entirely dedicated to the Divine. May my inherence in the *Vijnana Atman* (Pure Intellect) show me the way for abidance at the Source, the Reality.

●

"Bhagavan, it is said that when Bhagavan's mother was in her last moments, Bhagavan placed one hand on her heart and another on her head and remained like that for half an hour and that it caused her final liberation. Why can that not be done for me too? Bhagavan has no attachment to mother or kith or kin".

"It happened. That is all. I didn't have a thought or plan to do it. Somehow an idea flashed and it was executed."

"Am I not earnest or fit for it?"

"Are you?"

"What was the process?"

"You see, birth experiences are mental. Thinking is also like that, depending on *samskaras*. Mother was made to undergo all her future births in that comparatively short time."

●

"Just as water in a pot reflects the enormous sun within the narrow limits of the pot, so the *vasanas* or latent tendencies of the mind of the individual, acting as the reflecting medium, catch the all-pervading, infinite Light of Consciousness arising from the Heart and present in the form of a reflection the phenomenon called the mind. Seeing only this reflection, the *ajnani* is deluded into the belief that he is a finite being, the jiva."—SRI BHAGAVAN.

●

"Bhagavan, it is said that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa put his palm on the head of Swami Vivekananda and that the latter had transcendental experience. Could you not do some such thing for me?"

Bhagavan smiled and said: "Yes, scriptures speak of such *Dikshas* (Initiations) and *Hastha Diksha* is one of them. That too is a limitation. When a mighty river runs overflowing its banks, why divert it into a particular channel? Let all those who are thirsty drink to their hearts' content and capacity."

BY AN EYE - WITNESS

DR. T. N. KRISHNASWAMI

I had the rare privilege of being allowed to stay with the Maharshi during his last days. Knowing full well that his end was near, I was inquisitive to watch and see if he would leave any message for us. Would he not speak words of solace? Would he not leave behind some directions for us? It was sad indeed to look at the suffering of the body. But the mystery was his attitude to it. He described all the pain and suffering as though the body belonged to someone else. The question arose whether he was suffering or not. How could he describe the pain and suffering so accurately and locate it in the body and yet remain unaffected by it. 'There is a severe intolerable head-ache', he said as he was going into a slow uraemia and his kidneys were failing. The Maharshi never described the symptoms in a subjective manner. On the evening of the last day, the Maharshi asked to be propped up in a sitting posture. He tried to assume a semi-Padmasan posture. His breathing was getting laboured and heavy. The attending doctor put the oxygen to his nose. Those around stood sad, with bated breath. The Maharshi brushed aside the oxygen tube. There was a chorus of '*Arunachala Siva*' from outside the room. The gathering stood dumbfounded. Would death dare to touch him? No, it is impossible. A miracle would happen.

The atmosphere was tense with emotion, fear and expectation. There was some weeping. Very gently the Maharshi seemed to gasp a little and the body became still. Synchronising with the Maharshi's last breath, a meteor was seen to trail across the sky. We could scarcely realise what had happened. He had left us once for all. No more the beatific smile to greet us. No more the graceful form to adorn the Ashram. The Maharshi had deserted us! Were we now to turn our backs on the Ashram and go home disappointed?

This gave me a severe jolt. I was shocked. Had I missed the opportunity of a lifetime to imbibe the teaching of the Enlightened One ? I had done nothing in the direction of spiritual Sadhana. Had I wasted all my time, taking photographs, while I should have engaged myself in trying to understand and practise his teachings in his very presence. ‘ No ! I said to myself, this cannot be true. I was sure that I had obtained some grace from the Maharshi. He was somehow still here ; only, we have to learn to feel his Presence. We would never be forsaken for he had himself assured us that he was not going away.

Then I turned to studying his teachings. I began to see light in them. Some of the sentences touched me and made me feel that I was in his presence, listening to him. I took heart, the more I read, the more intimate the Maharshi became to me. His teaching pulsated with life ; I began to understand it and it mixed with my being and became my own.

◆

Devotee : How is one to realise the Self ?

Maharshi : Whose Self ? Find out.

D : Mine, but who am I ?

M : Find out yourself.

D : I don't know how.

M : Just think over the question. Who is it that says ‘ I don't know ’ ? Who is the ‘ I ’ in your statement ? What is not known ?

D : Somebody or something in me.

M : Who is that somebody ? In whom ?

D : Perhaps some power.

M : Find out.

D : Why was I born ?

M : Who was born ? The answer is the same to all your questions.

D : Who am I, then ?

M : (*Smiling*) you have come to examine me ? You must say who you are.

D : However much I may try, I do not seem to catch the ‘ I ’. It is not even clearly discernible.

M : Who is it that says that the ‘ I ’ is not discernible ? Are there two ‘ I ’s in you that one is not discernible by the other ? Whatever form your enquiry may take, you must finally come to the one I, the Self.

SANTHOSHAM . . . . . .

. . . . . Thank You !

SRI BHAGAVAN'S ways are always mysterious, but he never liked us to be carried away by the mystery, so he usually managed to find a normal explanation for his miracles. The editor and managing editor of the Ashram quarterly, *The Mountain Path* had ample evidence of this 'mystery-less mystery' in connection with the founding of that journal, and indeed with its subsequent running also !

When we called for suggestions to help us perform the Kumbhabhishekam in a grand way, as it is only fitting that we should, one devotee suggested bringing out a souvenir. We asked him to undertake the project, since he was professionally fitted to do so and it seemed beyond our competence ; but the next post brought his letter of regrets. That threw the responsibility back on us, and the very same night a strong feeling came that we ought to do this.

But what sort of souvenir ? Bhagavan provided the solution. A few days previously one of the office staff, on returning from Madras, had brought back with him a souvenir of the Kumbhabhishekam of Vigneswara Temple and this gave us the general idea.

Yes, this *Ramana Souvenir* should not be an ordinary souvenir with pompous articles, but every page of it should bring before us that sublime face and form, that profound gaze which captivated thousands, no matter what their race or religion, with its radiance of Grace. So the problem was solved : previously unpublished photographs should be brought to the knowledge alike of those who have seen that beatitude in his lifetime and those who have not.

From the general idea we came to practical problems. Our dear and enthusiastic devotee, Sai Das, was at hand with his offer to enlarge photos where necessary and to copy and touch up only in cases of absolute necessity when the original negative was damaged in some way, striving always for fidelity. He worked untiringly and has done a magnificent job.

The cost of making blocks of so many photographs would have been very heavy, but again help came just when it was needed. Our devotee (Bhagavan's devotee) Sri Vishnupant K. Kadav of Shankar & Co., Bombay, readily agreed to bear the cost and assist in making the blocks in the best possible way. The success of the project owes much to his kind undertaking.

The Jupiter Press, Madras, who regularly print *The Mountain Path* and Ashram books, have also been a great stand-by. They have undertaken the work in a spirit of real dedication.

We should be ungrateful if we did not convey our heartfelt thanks to our dear and long-standing devotee Dr. T. N. Krishnaswami, who was the official photographer of the Ashram in Bhagavan's lifetime.. These photographs were his form of service and dedication and mean much to him. There have been other photographers too; such as M/s. P. R. S. Mani and G. G. Welling, but he was the principal one and most of the photographs are his handiwork.

We owe to Sri Arthur Osborne our particular thanks for promptly and expertly editing the various articles that have gone in, and his enthusiastic co-operation, encouragement and able guidance throughout this project.

We also owe our heartfelt thanks to an anonymous but abiding devotee who offered timely financial aid to bring out the *Souvenir*. May Sri Bhagavan bless him!

We bow down to each one who has helped in bringing out this Souvenir successfully. We appreciate the goodwill of all those who, though far from affluent, have contributed their part by taking out a page in it and all those who have written a page of appreciation. To all of them we say simply *santhosham*.

Why *santhosham* ?

On the very last day of Bhagavan's physical life he said this word to one of his personal attendants : "*santhosham*" (I am pleased). The attendant was taken aback, so Bhagavan explained : "The English have a word 'thank you', but we say simply *santhosham* !" Should we not follow our Master's example ? *Santhosham, Santhosham, Santhosham* . . . .

Sri Ramanārpanamasthu

●

Cover Pages 3 and 4 donated by the following devotees :

With humble obeisance to Bhagavan from :

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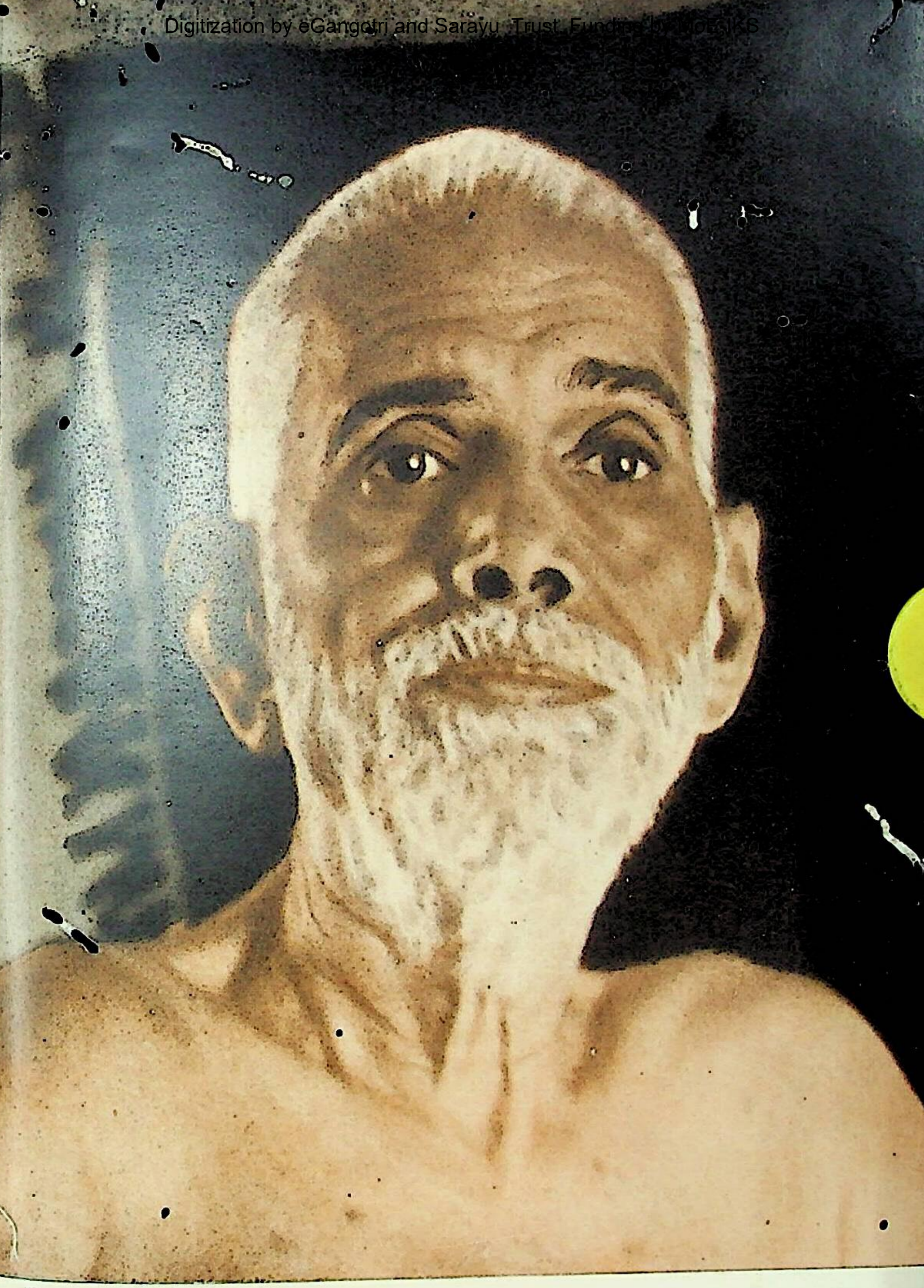
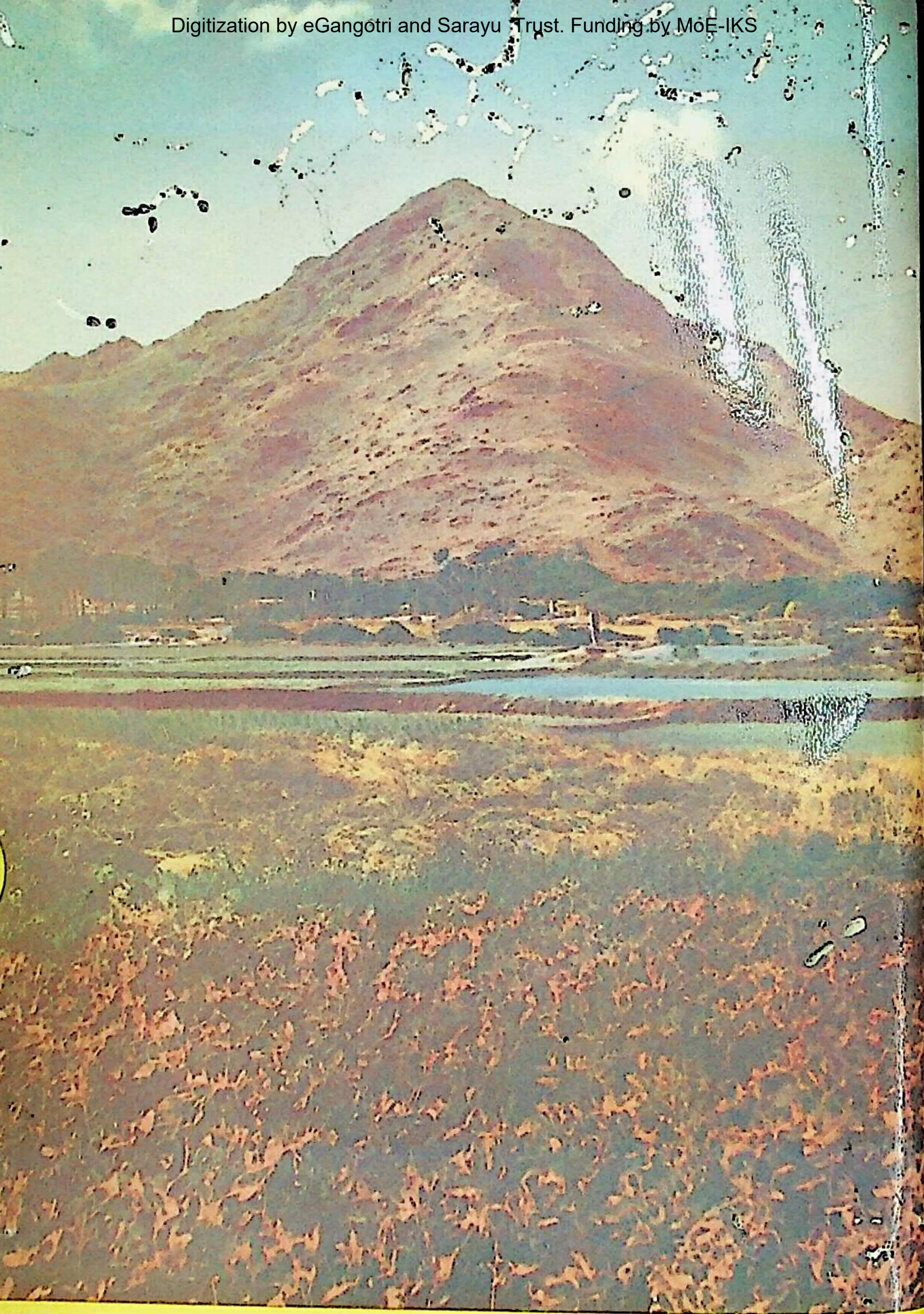


There reigns perfect peace when Thou showerest nectar by Thy pellucid, moon-like, gentle smile; life pours forth from the incomparable grace of Thy steady and shining eyes; Thy unswerving abidance as the Self in the Heart-lotus sheds irresistible glory all round; O Ramana! what kind of silence is this? It has no parallel on earth, My Lord?

—Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni.



"Arunachala! Thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala!"

—Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi